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ABSTRACT

This first volume of a study of former Texas high school students who left as graduates or dropouts during the school years 1963-64 and 1968-69 presents a profile of the respondents and summarizes their opinions of their high school experiences. A sample of the State's 89 school districts was contacted by mail or interview, with 5,063 respondents in the 12,649 sample. Details of the sampling procedures and of the respondent profile are given. Respondents from both school years gave their highest approval to courses in which practical skills were taught. Slightly more than 30 percent reported that their opinions had changed concerning the value of courses they had taken in high school. Highest favorable opinion changes were toward bookkeeping, typing/shorthand, vocational industrial education, vocational office/business, and vocational homemaking. An overall favorable endorsement of teachers was given, although some serious criticisms were made. Much of this volume consists of the respondents' comments on the classroom environment, curriculum, skills, vocational training, and teachers. Related documents are available in this issue as VT 021 091, VT 021 093, and VT 021 094. (MF)

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Texas Education Product Study

Volume 1

Final Report

VT021092

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March 31, 1973

Dr. J. W. Edgar
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
201 East Eleventh Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Dr. Edgar:

Submitted herewith is the final report on the Texas Education Product Study, as required by our contract with you dated March 16, 1972.

The study was made possible through the cooperation of 89 school districts -- whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged -- and through the gift of approximately one hour of time by the more than 5,000 young adults who responded. The Laboratory greatly appreciates the opportunity to have conducted such an important project.

Sincerely yours,

James H. Perry

James H. Perry
Executive Director

JHP/shb

FOREWORD

Every state needs the best possible research base from which the entire public school program can be improved or redirected, preferably by the teachers and administrators themselves. Although not every person would agree that a crisis in confidence exists today at the schoolhouse, surely persons agree that schools continue to change. They must be changed intelligently and in accordance with the needs of students and the society they serve. One way of ascertaining needs is to ask ex-students. That, in essence, is the objective of the Texas Education Product Study.

The "student" of 1968-69 and, more particularly, of 1963-64, is now an ADULT. The 5,063 responses included in this report are from persons who now teach, preach, serve as master craftsmen, practice law, participate as parents in the P-TA, own and operate or work in businesses, nurse and perform surgery or vital paramedical duties. Included are Job Corps graduates, Viet Nam veterans, Ivy League graduates, Technical Institute graduates, military sergeants, almost 2,000 housewives, and thousands of persons in other occupations. Included also are scores of predominantly successful, taxpaying adults who live productively and happily -- although never graduated from high school.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This report is about Texas public high schools as viewed by their ex-students. It summarizes the views and experiences of students (now adults) who left Texas high schools as graduates or as dropouts during the school years 1963-64 and 1968-69.

The Study's objectives were:

- To determine the extent to which work and studies or training beyond high school are based upon high school experiences;
- To gather comprehensive employment status information;
- To obtain appraisals of courses, activities, and school personnel;
- To obtain suggestions for improving schools and preventing dropouts;
- To establish a data base for educational planning and assessment.

The research design for this Study was developed by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory for the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas. This Council, which in 1971 made this follow-up study of public school education its top priority, includes these leading citizens, who give their time and energy to the enhancement of educational opportunities:

William L. Jones Jr., Kingsland, Chairman
*Dr. James L. Boone Jr., College Station
*John L. Cockrill, Dallas
Elwood E. Collins, Texarkana
Supt. S. P. Cowan, Rio Grande City
Dewey M. Cox, Orange
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W. H. (Harrell) Townsend, Austin
Marcos A. Vann, Fort Worth, Vice Chairman
Morris S. Webb, Waco

*Asterisks denote members of the Council's Product Study Committee.

Chaired by Mr. McGee, the Council's Product Study Committee joined with the Laboratory in planning and co-sponsoring a "Concerns Conference" in Austin on October 11, 1971. Conference participants included the Commissioner of Education, the Council's Product Study Committee, staff members of the sponsoring organizations and of the Texas Education Agency, and representatives of the following organizations:

- Associated General Contractors
- Chenier Business College
- Coordinating Board, Texas Colleges and University Systems
- Educational Testing Service
- Elkins Institute
- Evaluation Research Associates
- Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Texas
- Nixon-Clay College
- North Texas State University
- Office of the Governor
- San Antonio ISD
- San Jacinto College
- Tarrant County Junior College
- Texas A. & M. University
- Texas Association of School Administrators
- Texas Employment Commission
- Texas Hospital Association
- Texas Industrial Commission
- Texas Research League
- Texas State Teachers Association
- Texas State Technical Institute
- The University of Houston
- The University of Texas at Austin
- Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas
- Vocational Homemaking Teachers Association of Texas
- Waxahachie Independent School Dist.

All conference participants were asked to study and react to the research design and follow-up instruments. Many helpful suggestions were received.

Keynoter for the conference was Dr. Jacob Kaufman, nationally-known consultant to follow-up studies. An economist from Pennsylvania State University, he described follow-up studies completed in other states. He pointed to the enduring and beneficial returns that can be expected from a reliable data base of follow-up information.

Staff members of the Laboratory, the Advisory Council, and the Texas

Education Agency also met with another nationally-known consultant for follow-up studies, Dr. Kenneth Hoyt of the University of Maryland.

The Laboratory's task force worked closely with both Executive Director Alton Ice and Program Officer Elton Thomas on the development of survey instruments. Valuable instrument design assistance came from Dr. Rodman Porter, an administrator with the Texas Department of Public Welfare; Oscar Millican, a vocational program director with the Texas Education Agency; J. Armand Lanier, a vocational consultant with the Texas Rehabilitation Commission; and Mrs. Anita Brewer, assistant program director, Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System.

In response to recommendations by Commissioner J. W. Edgar and Associate Commissioner John Guemple, the State Board of Education authorized a follow-up study to be performed as proposed in the 89-district research design developed for the Advisory Council by the Laboratory. Nine prospective contractors considered the request for proposals distributed by the Texas Education Agency. The Laboratory was the successful bidder. The State Board in January, 1972, authorized the Commissioner of Education to negotiate a contract for the study's implementation.

Dr. James H. Perry, the Laboratory's executive director, named the primary author of the research design, Dr. Weldon Brewer, the study director. Dr. Brewer's previous research included a follow-up study of 536 Houston graduates of 1967-68.

Commissioner Edgar requested the superintendents of 89 districts (varying in size, geography, ethnic membership, and economic conditions) to participate. Specific persons from specific high schools in specific districts were targeted for interview in accordance with a research design that allowed no substitutions. The design called for a representative sample (one interviewee in every 20 possible names for each of the 1963-64 and 1968-69 years) of the entire State.

Although all 89 districts participated, some were slow to respond for various reasons:

- Staff busy with other studies
- Serious doubts whether after eight years ex-students could be found
- Concern about how the information might be used
- Inaccessibility of 1964 records that had been reduced to microfilm
- Mixing of permanent records for subject years with accumulations of several years
- Records destroyed when high school burned
- Some questions about possible duplication of the Product Study and follow-up information already being sought locally

SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

The intent of the Texas Education Product Study (hereinafter: "the Study") was to obtain data from which generalizations could be made concerning the entire public school system in Texas. To have included every public high school would have been impractical. The research design called for a probability sample of approximately the same size that would have resulted if every Texas public high school had contributed the names of 5% of its graduates -- plus 5% of its dropouts -- for the school years 1963-64 and 1968-69.

Before the chance selections were made, eliminating some districts and some high schools within districts, every one of the 250,000 to 300,000 graduates and dropouts for the two years named had the same mathematical probability of selection as every other graduate and dropout from those years. It was assumed that a chance selection of representative districts from groups of districts having approximately the same average daily attendance would provide a feasible basis for obtaining the state-wide sample.

Twenty-nine districts, representing the major urban concentrations in Texas, were not subjected to the possibility of elimination. Their retention was considered necessary if the final results were to be regarded as representative of all regions in the State. The other 992 districts which operated high schools in 1968-69 were grouped on the basis of their average daily attendance for that year. One district then was selected by chance from each group. Each surviving district contributed to the probability sample a number of names equivalent to the overall number that would have come from all districts in that particular group if there had been no eliminations (i.e., if the 5% ratio had been applied singly to every district in the group).

The surviving district, if the group represented by it contained ten districts, had 50% of all its eligible names (10 X 5%) included in the state-wide sample. If the group represented by it contained five districts, then 25% of the surviving district's eligible names (5 X 5%) were included in the sample. Twenty-nine large districts, representing only themselves,had only 5% (1 X 5%) of their eligible names included in the state-wide sample.

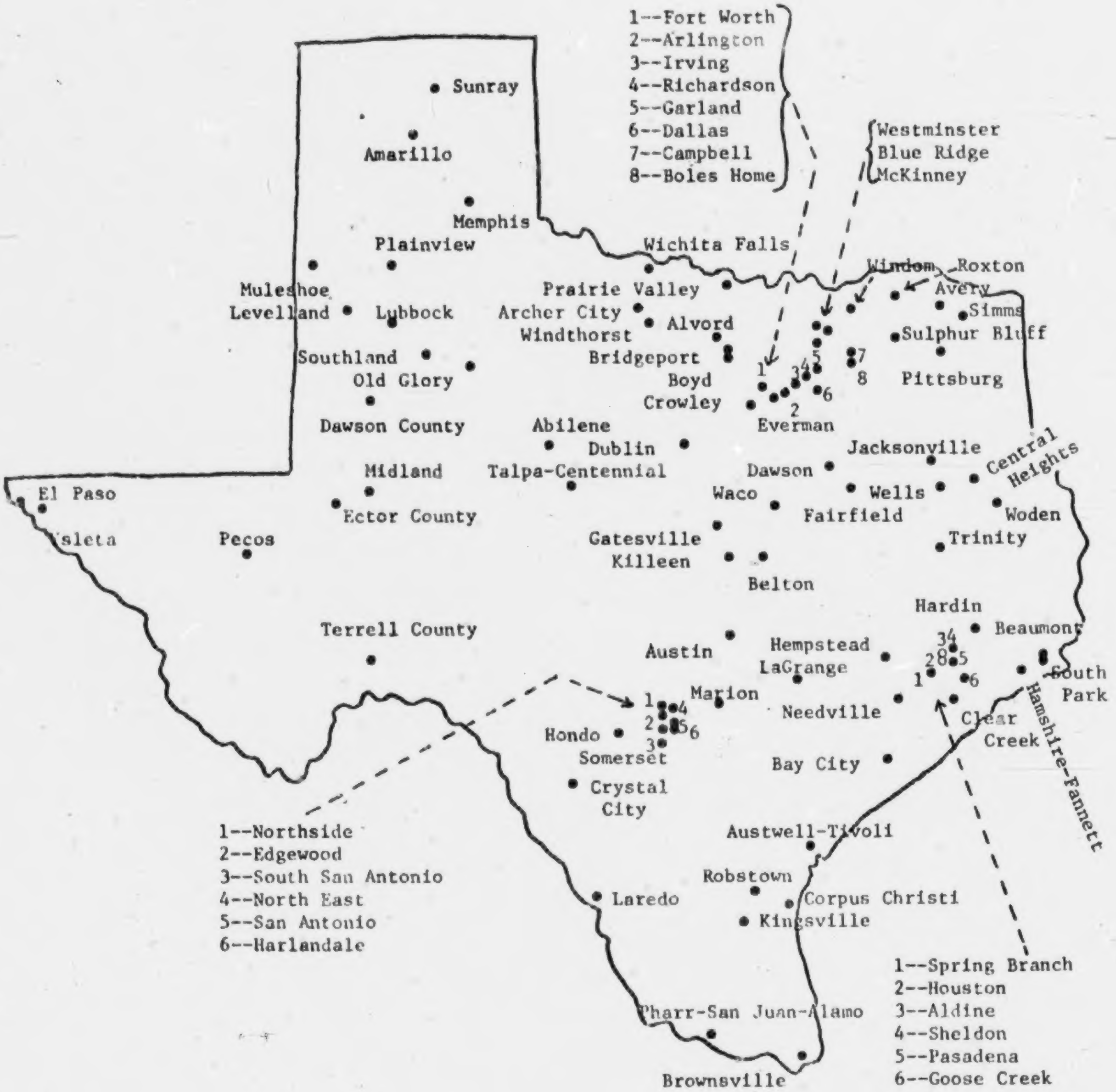
The following list of the selected districts includes the percentages of participation in the Study, by district.

	1968-69 ADA	Pct. Included	Number Included	Number Responses	Pct. of Response
1. Houston	207,704	5%	1,028	343	33.4%
2. Dallas	141,732	5	784	337	43.0
3. Fort Worth	75,379	5	369	122	33.1
4. San Antonio	70,040	5	470	96	20.4
5. El Paso	56,215	5	219	76	34.7
6. Austin	47,136	5	217	62	28.6
7. Corpus Christi	42,095	5	265	101	38.1
8. Spring Branch	31,958	5	181	86	47.5
9. Lubbock	31,358	5	207	93	44.9
10. Pasadena	31,350	5	122	43	35.2
11. Ysleta	28,364	5	124	50	40.3
12. Amarillo	27,267	5	82	33	40.2
13. Beaumont	13,930	5	89	29	32.6
14. South Park	11,932	5	131	46	35.1
15. Richardson	25,332	5	133	55	41.4
16. North East (Bexar)	24,406	5	144	64	44.4
17. Ector Co. (Odessa)	23,034	5	111	42	37.8
18. Irving	21,049	5	72	25	34.7
19. Edgewood	20,424	5	51	9	17.7
20. Arlington	19,112	5	94	40	42.6

	1968-69 ADA	Pct. Included	Number Included	Number Responses	Pct. of Response
21. Aldine	18,076	5%	81	18	22.2%
22. Abilene	17,853	5	85	47	55.3
23. Garland	17,772	5	64	26	40.6
24. Waco	17,648	5	144	35	24.3
25. Wichita Falls	17,262	5	94	55	58.5
26. Laredo	16,671	5	91	27	29.7
27. Midland	16,604	5	88	37	42.0
28. Northside (San A.)	15,934	5	54	18	33.3
29. Brownsville	15,697	5	54	16	29.6
30. Harlandale (San A.)	15,622	20	190	85	44.7
31. Goose Creek	11,968	25	373	139	37.3
32. Killeen	10,485	25	212	57	26.9
33. Clear Creek	8,627	25	172	58	33.7
34. Pharr-San Juan-Alamo	8,013	25	127	60	47.2
35. South San Antonio	6,979	25	145	36	24.8
36. Plainview	6,094	50	388	181	46.6
37. Kingsville	5,569	50	270	114	42.2
38. Robstown	4,805	50	239	81	33.9
39. Bay City	3,939	50	202	121	59.9
40. Pecos	3,851	50	281	103	36.7
41. McKinney	3,533	50	256	110	43.0
42. Levelland	3,153	50	125	70	56.0
43. Jacksonville	3,006	50	170	81	47.4
44. Everman	2,783	50	125	19	15.2
45. Belton	2,689	50	159	52	32.7
46. Crystal City	2,523	50	104	32	30.8
47. Sheldon	2,192	100	213	63	29.6
48. Pittsburg	1,891	100	275	146	53.1
49. Muleshoe	1,815	100	231	124	53.7
50. Gatesville	1,695	100	250	101	40.4
51. Hondo	1,538	100	126	103	81.7
52. LaGrange	1,334	100	281	110	39.1
53. Needville	1,183	100	154	85	55.2
54. Bridgeport	1,106	100	106	72	67.9
55. Hempstead	1,049	100	125	52	41.6
56. Hamshire-Fannett	973	100	116	68	58.6
57. Fairfield	873	100	71	56	78.9
58. Crowley	856	100	58	34	58.6
59. Memphis	806	100	83	44	53.0
60. Trinity	762	100	78	33	42.3

	1968-69 ADA	Pct. Included	Number Included	Number Responses	Pct. of Response
61. Somerset	685	100%	111	53	47.7%
62. Hardin	629	100	86	42	48.9
63. Sunray	618	100	68	44	64.7
64. Dublin	573	100	86	64	74.4
65. Archer City	533	100	53	41	77.4
66. Boyd	512	100	69	35	50.7
67. Terrell County	466	100	60	41	68.0
68. Marion	457	100	66	43	65.2
69. Simms	422	100	49	36	73.5
70. Austwell-Tivoli	385	100	39	20	51.3
71. Avery	377	100	46	33	71.7
72. Dawson (Navarro)	346	100	53	29	54.7
73. Windthorst	338	100	43	39	90.7
74. Wells	306	100	46	25	54.4
75. Central Heights	281	100	38	16	42.1
76. Alvord	272	100	39	28	71.8
77. Dawson (Dawson Co.)	249	100	22	10	45.5
78. Woden	226	100	45	13	28.9
79. Blue Ridge	221	100	26	20	76.9
80. Boles Home	197	100	29	10	34.5
81. Roxton	179	100	65	24	36.9
82. Campbell	172	100	20	9	45.0
83. Sulphur Bluff	155	100	27	19	70.4
84. Southland	147	100	13	7	53.8
85. Talpa-Centennial	126	100	19	15	78.9
86. Prairie Valley	109	100	24	12	50.0
87. Windom	101	100	16	11	68.8
88. Westminster	91	100	16	6	37.5
89. Old Glory	72	100	16	13	81.3

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS


1--Fort Worth
2--Arlington
3--Irving
4--Richardson
5--Garland
6--Dallas
7--Campbell
8--Boles Home
Westminster
Blue Ridge
McKinney
Sunray
Amarillo
Memphis
Plainview
Wichita Falls
Windom
Roxton
Avery
Simms
Sulphur Bluff
Pittsburg
Muleshoe
Levelland
Lubbock
Prairie Valley
Archer City
Windthorst
Alvord
Bridgeport
Boyd
Crowley
Everman
Southland
Old Glory
Dawson County
Abilene
Dublin
Talpa-Centennial
Midland
Ector County
El Paso
Ysleta
Pecos
Jacksonville
Central Heights
Dawson
Wells
Waco
Fairfield
Woden
Trinity
Gatesville
Killeen
Belton
Terrell County
Hardin
Beaumont
Austin
Hempstead
LaGrange
South Park
Marion
Needville
Clear Creek
Hamshire-Fannett
Hondo
Somerset
Bay City
Crystal City
Austwell-Tivoli
Robstown
Laredo
Corpus Christi
Kingsville
Pharr-San Juan-Alamo
Brownsville
1--Northside
2--Edgewood
3--South San Antonio
4--North East
5--San Antonio
6--Harlandale
1--Spring Branch
2--Houston
3--Aldine
4--Sheldon
5--Pasadena
6--Goose Creek

DATA-GATHERING PROCEDURES

Of the 12,649 persons named in the probability sample, 5,063 had completed a 16-page questionnaire when computer printout summaries were prepared in mid-January, 1973. (The 210 questionnaires that arrived since then are not included in the printouts.)

Forty percent of the responses came from the 1963-64 group; 60% came from 1968-69. Respondents were 54% female and 46% male; 96% graduates of high school and 4% dropouts; 9% Black Americans, 12% Spanish-surnamed, and 79% Anglo- or other Americans. They came from families in which only 9% of the mothers and 15% of the fathers had college degrees. The responses were obtained in 1972, largely during the months of September through December, and during the first two weeks of 1973.

The co-operation of local school officials was important to the Study's success. Each step in the data-gathering process was examined carefully for its possible effects upon each community involved. Interviews, contacts, and correspondence within participating school districts were preceded by letters concerning the purpose of the Study.

The Study Director conferred personally with local school officials and spent some time in all 89 districts. He was offered access to the student records in all districts in which such access appeared to be necessary for information verification.

Multiple-contact strategies were used to intensify the search for members of the sample. School officials often were not the same as those of 1963-64; typically, the person being sought had not been seen or heard from in several years. The staff had to deal with thousands of returned questionnaires marked by postmen as "addressee unknown," "moved and left no forwarding address," "forwarding order expired," "no such person," "unclaimed," "bad dog tied by mail box," "no such street number," and "refused." When postmen did deliver the mail to the specified address, the persons receiving it often would retaliate with "married and moved away," "married name unknown," "living in Germany," "gone to California," or "You've got the wrong Smith."

The following techniques were used persistently until the missing persons were found:

- Repeat mailings of questionnaire.
- Telephone or write former classmates of the person being sought and ask for all possible information.
- Telephone or write school personnel.
- Visit the school and check permanent records for all clues, such as name(s) of parent(s), siblings, parents' employers.
- Look for person's name or parents' names in telephone directory, Polk's or Hudspeth's city directories, college directories.
- Ask telephone operator(s) for information.
- As wanted persons are found, read names of their classmates over the telephone.
- Call or write other persons having the same surname.
- Check with last known employer of the subject (of his parent).
- Ask the person having access to a telephone to contact persons without listed telephone numbers.
- Use Criss-Cross references whenever telephone number is learned without other identifying information. (Mothers often give their daughter's number, but not married name, and vice versa.)
- Stress accuracy of apartment numbers, since postmen and/or apartment managers have mail distribution problems in large complexes.

- By telephone or home visit, explain importance of the Study to parent or other family member.

- Encourage the interest of the person whose response is desired by commenting upon the considerable information already obtained about his or her fellow classmates.

- Advise potential respondents that the information is being sought "for the State Board of Education" and also to help the schools. If hesitancy occurs, refer to confidentiality of the Study.

The interviewing technique worked most effectively in Windthorst, Hondo, Bridgeport, Sunray, Hamshire-Fannett, Terrell County, Somerset, Hardin, Talpa-Centennial, and Marion -- communities in which the handicaps of distance and anonymity were easily overcome. The Study Director conducted interviews in most of the districts. In addition, 63 in-depth telephone interviews of dropouts were conducted by a vocational consultant, Mr. Lanier.

Early in the Study, it became apparent that interviews and mailed-in questionnaires (utilizing the same forms) provided essentially the same information. Respondents by mail often gave more information than could be obtained by interview. Persons too busy for an hour's interview can answer the same questions with deliberation and thoughtfulness if permitted to choose their own time. As the total number of interview responses began to lag behind the staff's expectations, during the early months of the Study, the original priority -- interview, and if not, reach by mail -- was discarded in favor of obtaining as many completed questionnaires as possible, using any successful method of contact.

Comprising less than 10% of the total response, the questionnaires completed by interviewers could be eliminated from the printouts without causing major changes in the Study results. Data analysts were unable to find any significant differences between the forms that came by way of interviewers and those mailed directly by the respondents. The scores of interviews conducted personally by the Study Director, as well as the staff-conducted dropout interviews, provided a context for data interpretation and report writing that is valuable. The tenor of this report and its validity are aided considerably by the attitudes and meanings that were transmitted in direct conversations.

PROCESSING OF QUESTIONNAIRES

Each questionnaire was given an identification code and virtually all responses were precoded for the computer. Not precoded were several open-ended questions concerning "the best teacher you had," present occupation, father's occupation, the reasons some students drop out of school, and "suggestions for making the high school you attended more useful and beneficial to the students who go there." Also not precoded were the responses to "Other" blanks (for answers not provided for in set categories).

Identification of curriculum studied in high school was attempted on the basis of the courses listed by each respondent. Emphasis was placed upon making a correct identification of all respondents who had taken at least three years of vocational education courses in high school -- they were coded as "vocational." No criterion was set for determining whether a given curriculum was "general" or "pre-college" -- if the coder felt uncomfortable while trying to make such a determination, he was advised to code the curriculum as "unknown."

The staff selected ethnicity codes on the basis of Spanish surnames, lists on which Blacks had been identified, personal interviews or telephone conversations, and correspondence with persons in the local communities.

Four of the questions required interpretation by coding clerks prior to data punching. They were:

"Indicate as precisely as possible the courses you wanted and could not take. Also, which course(s) did you take but now wish that you had not taken?" (Question 16)

"What did you expect the (post-secondary) school or training to prepare you to do?" (Question 24)

"Which one of the courses you took in high school was (is) the most valuable to you in the work you did on the first job? on your present job (if employed)? (Question 38)

"What is your present career goal (field) as you now see it?" (Question 39)

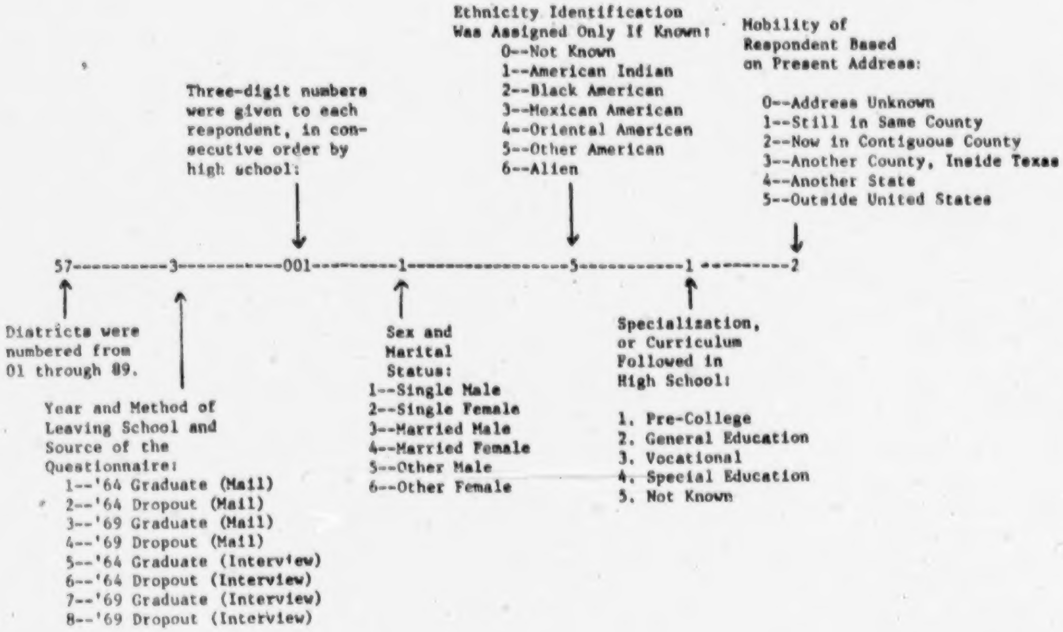
Each set of punched computer cards (4 for each respondent) was grouped with others from the same school district. Printouts on each school district were made during the verification or "debugging" process. Sub-group printouts were made after the information was transferred from cards to disc.

All open-ended responses were typed: one copy of each transcription was sent to the superintendent of the school district to which it applied (with names and other identifying information removed, except names of best teachers). One copy of each transcript was delivered to the Commissioner of Education (with names of school districts removed).

Although precoded for the computer, four questions were not keypunched because of what appeared to be extremely low cell counts. These (see questionnaire) were questions 5, 36, 37, and 47, all of which were hand-tabulated. Coders had some difficulty reducing the answers to questions 2, 39, and 43 into proper code categories -- they also were hand-tabulated.

Present career goals sometimes were stated in such general terms as "live life to the fullest" and "to make more money." Present occupation titles likewise could be fractionated into hundreds of categories, depending upon the judgment of the coder. The staff sought to avoid the loss of data from too few categories. The computer totals were supplemented by hand tabulations of questions 7, 13, 14, and 16.

The following illustration includes the components that made up the identification code placed at the top of every questionnaire prior to the coding and keypunching of responses:



57----------3-----------001---------1----------------5-----------1 ---------2

Districts were numbered from 01 through 89.

Year and Method of Leaving School and Source of the Questionnaire:
- 1--'64 Graduate (Mail)
- 2--'64 Dropout (Mail)
- 3--'69 Graduate (Mail)
- 4--'69 Dropout (Mail)
- 5--'64 Graduate (Interview)
- 6--'64 Dropout (Interview)
- 7--'69 Graduate (Interview)
- 8--'69 Dropout (Interview)

Three-digit numbers were given to each respondent, in consecutive order by high school:

Sex and Marital Status:
- 1--Single Male
- 2--Single Female
- 3--Married Male
- 4--Married Female
- 5--Other Male
- 6--Other Female

Ethnicity Identification Was Assigned Only If Known:
- 0--Not Known
- 1--American Indian
- 2--Black American
- 3--Mexican American
- 4--Oriental American
- 5--Other American
- 6--Alien

Specialization, or Curriculum Followed in High School:

1. Pre-College
2. General Education
3. Vocational
4. Special Education
5. Not Known

Mobility of Respondent Based on Present Address:

- 0--Address Unknown
- 1--Still in Same County
- 2--Now in Contiguous County
- 3--Another County, Inside Texas
- 4--Another State
- 5--Outside United States

To facilitate making comparisons and studying various relationships in the data, the total Study sample was divided into 33 sub-groups according to size of school district, year of leaving high school, graduates, dropouts, ethnicity, specialization while in high school, sex, and marital status.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The Study's greatest strengths are the high percentage of responses obtained (42% of the total potential) in comparison with percentages attained in similar studies in other states; the participation of all 89 school districts included in the research design; and the quantity and quality of the data received. The computer printouts included 242 variables.

Private and parochial high schools are not included nor are public eleemosynary institutions and dropouts who left school prior to the ninth grade. The research design did not require that this Study be representative of the whole society. There was not time to interview the seven non-respondents known to be or thought to be in the custody of the Texas Department of Corrections; no attempt was made to interview the girl (a high school graduate) now in the Austin State School for the Mentally Retarded. Several school districts submitted no dropout lists and less than half a dozen identified which students were classified as Special Education.

There was no time to return to the schools with names of all interviewees and obtain post-response records information. The difficulty in identifying Special Education students, aliens, American Indians, and American Orientals could not be overcome, since no respondent was asked for such information. A surprisingly large number of foreign exchange students were included in the sample, but only one of them responded -- from Australia.

A major weakness of any follow-up study involving thousands of subjects is the disproportionate percentages of responses likely to be received from (1) the more verbal, (2) the more visible, (3) the more affluent, (4) the more stable, and (5) the more "successful" members of the population being studied. The staff tried to offset or compensate for these tendencies throughout the present Study.

Other possible biases are recognized, although their effects on this Study are assumed to be insignificant:

- Ethnic considerations were weighed during the data-gathering process, with Blacks contacting Blacks and Mexican Americans contacting Mexican Americans whenever feasible.
- Non-members of the sample who completed and submitted questionnaires were excluded from the Study.
- Pranksters submitted less than half a dozen questionnaires, all of which were excluded from the Study. The staff is aware of no attempt by anyone to exert an undue influence on the Study.
- Coding procedures, in preparation for keypunching, were reviewed to insure that the coding represented respondents' viewpoints.
- Transcriptions of open-ended responses were reviewed; errors or omissions were corrected.
- Completed questionnaires were kept in locked rooms.
- Only one questionnaire is known to be lost; questionnaires were coded in such a way that they can be located readily.
- Did some school official omit the name of a potentially-hostile respondent? The frank and often critical answers offered by respondents make this possibility almost an absurdity.
- Were dormant Black high schools overlooked? High schools operating in 1963-64 are listed in the Texas Public School Directory for that year. The staff asked two districts to supply names from Black high schools when it became apparent that dormant high schools had been overlooked.
- Precautions were taken to be sure interviewers actually performed interviews. One interview was discarded by the staff in favor of a questionnaire completed by a sample member who had received an incomplete interview.

- The sample is broadly representative of all major geographic areas of the state; however, the random selection process used in choosing 60 of the 89 school districts was based on size of district and this resulted in some counties' having three districts selected by chance (Bexar, Wise, Collin) while some populous counties (Smith, Tom Green, Victoria, Grayson, Denton) had none selected.

- Some potential respondents did not participate because they were fearful of being identified. This viewpoint was expressed by one woman who returned a blank questionnaire with an explanatory note and another woman who telephoned. The staff was unable to determine how many other potential respondents failed to participate for this reason.

- Although it is possible that an insignificant minority of respondents might have been influenced by what they thought was "expected of them" by school officials, the consensus of the staff is that more than 99 percent of the responses are valid, honest statements from eligible respondents.

- Although conscientious and repeated efforts were made to give each member of the sample an opportunity to participate, responses from some districts were higher (on a percentage basis) than those from others. The final tabulation is comparable to a heavy turnout of eligible voters in an election; the percentage of representation, by district, ranges from 15 to 91 percent.

- The staff was unable to assess the possible influence resulting from postal officials' handling of mailed questionnaires. It is possible that some questionnaires were lost in the mail, or that postal workers in one community or military installation might have been more diligent in correcting outdated addresses than were the postmen in other communities or installations.

- Although the staff attempted to contact members of the sample who had no telephone, it is impossible to determine whether the relatives, friends and neighbors who promised to contact these persons actually did; however, more than 90 percent of the persons in the probability sample have telephones in their homes.

- "Class spirit" probably influenced participation in the study; districts in which respondents expressed an active interest in their former classmates showed a higher percentage of participation than did districts in which there was little apparent interest.

- Some staff members who contacted members of the sample by means of long-distance telephoning received a higher rate of response than did others. Callers were cautioned against saying things that would bias the response.

- The completeness of school lists, the length of time the lists were available to the staff, the interest shown by individual administrators, counselors, _et al._, exerted some influence upon the percentage rate of responses from the various districts.

- The approaches used, including the wording and general tone of correspondence, caused an undetermined number of potential respondents to refrain from participation in the Study. One man returned a blank questionnaire with a note explaining that he resented being classified as a "product." Another respondent objected to the wording on a flyer that categorized her as a "young adult."

- The availability of telephone and city directories facilitated the location of potential respondents. However, city directories for the smaller districts included in the sample were not available.

- Males were more easily located than females, particularly in the 1963-64 sample. Their mail, when forwarded, was more likely to be delivered. The location of females was difficult because of changes to husbands' surnames.

- Persons having unusual surnames or given names were more easily located than persons with common names, particularly in the larger cities.

- One male member of a military service branch said he was forbidden by security regulations to give anyone information about himself.

- Killeen was the notable example of a school district with a high percentage of military families from other states. To a lesser extent, the mobility of federal employees also was a problem in the Bexar County, Abilene, Clear Creek, El Paso, and Corpus Christi schools.

- Parents sometimes elected not to forward questionnaires. A frequent comment from a parent reached by telephone was, "Yes, two or three of the questionnaires came here, but I didn't know it was important." Some parents stated frankly that they had neither seen nor heard from their son or daughter for months. Others had forwarding addresses but indicated they had a communication problem. Some disapproved of their children's life styles and ideas. One mother said, "Anything he'll tell you about his school won't do you any good."

Through additional analysis of the data, by giving more weight to respondent categories that are under-represented, the investigator could attempt corrections for each possible bias. An interested researcher might pull from this Study a structured sample (e. g., 800 questionnaires) and make generalizations statistically similar to those that would have resulted if all 12,649 members of the probability sample (less deceased members) had responded. One difficulty arising from that approach is finding or agreeing upon the proper bases for stratification; another difficulty is that each questionnaire selected for the smaller sample would assume more than six times its former significance, a ratio that would be magnified even further if weighting were applied. By having the raw data made available without weightings, the researchers who use this Study will be able to place their own emphases -- including areas which they think need weighting.

The staff noted remarkably small changes in the trends and percentages observed in the first computer printout (involving 700 questionnaires) and the final computer printout (involving 5,063 questionnaires). The first computer printout was used as the basis for a progress report made to the Texas Education Agency on October 30, 1972. The consistency between percentages in all areas included in the two printouts suggests that additional stratification techniques, if applied, would have produced few changes in the results obtained. (A similar evaluation, with similar results, was made of the 210 late-arriving questionnaires received in 1973 since the 5,063 were fed into the computer.)

The sheer magnitude of the results obtained, plus the fact that geographic, ethnic, and school district size factors were accounted for in the research design, provide a statistical framework within which minor flaws or fluctuations in data collection and data treatment could have insignificant impact on the results.

When the data were divided into seven categories, in which districts were grouped according to size, striking between-group similarities resulted in all 242 variables which were processed by computer. If in any school district, or even within a group of districts, there had been a deliberate attempt to contaminate the results of the Study, the resulting computer printouts from the district(s) probably would have contained sufficient clues to reveal the bias.

RESPONSES FROM PERSONS NOT COUNTED IN THE STUDY

Approximately two dozen former students who were contacted by interviewers, mail or telephone said or wrote that they did not wish to participate in the Texas Education Product Study.

There was no way to ascertain the number who never intended to respond, but declined to express themselves. The staff estimate that at least 4,000 eligible persons received the questionnaire and, for reasons never fully explained, failed to return it.

Some respondents, including eligible members of the sample, chose to ignore the questionnaire in favor of writing comments generally about the study and its objectives.

Comments Submitted in Lieu of the Questionnaire

"I don't have the time to answer this. I'd appreciate not receiving any more of this, nor any more phone calls to my parents."

"Thank you for sending me your 'Texas Education Product Study questionnaire.' I have completed the questionnaire and will forward it to you upon receipt of $10.00, which is my fee for answering items such as these."

"You can kindly tell the principle (sic) he has no right to give my name and address out, and please keep this form."

"I really do not care to fill out the questionnaire."

Former Students Unable to Respond

Two former students in the sample -- one with a physical disability and the other, a mental disability -- were unable to respond to the Product Study questionnaire.

The mother of one of the former students returned the questionnaire with the following note attached: "My son was in an accident in 1966 and has brain damage. He is not able to answer this study."

The mother of the other ex-student, contacted by telephone, said her daughter currently is taking vocational training at a State-operated institution and would be unable to complete the questionnaire without assistance. The mother said that her daughter, although she had always been a slow learner, had been granted a high school diploma by her school district.

Responses From Ineligible Persons

Thirty-nine responses came from ineligible persons whose names were not included on the lists of former students submitted by school districts in the sample. Most of these questionnaires were returned by a brother, sister, or parent of a former student in the sample. In some cases, questionnaires were completed by spouses, friends or college roommates of students in the sample.

One carefully-completed questionnaire was returned by a 56-year-old man who now is a supervisor at an oil refinery. "It has been 40 years since I left high school," he wrote. "I have no idea what courses are taught now." The questionnaire had been intended for his son, who had not been identified by the school as a "junior."

A 41-year-old father, now an ironworker, completed a questionnaire intended for his son. Interestingly, his answer closely resembled those of the 1964 graduates in the sample. His main concern was that the small school he attended (only 17 members in his senior class) "didn't have enough vocational shop training."

A 58-year-old retired Air Force master sergeant completed and returned a questionnaire intended for his son. "I left school to go to work when college graduates could not get jobs," he said. "I filled out this form at your request, however I did not attend a Texas school." He also said that "when I left 40 years ago, it was (a) small (school). It may be changed by now, at least, I hope so."

The following note was attached to a partially-completed questionnaire sent by a 25-year-old woman: "I got this in the mail and started to fill it out when I found out it belonged to someone of the class of 1963-1964. This should go to my sister."

The 20-year-old son of a deputy sheriff returned a completed questionnaire with this brief comment attached: "I am his brother."

A completed questionnaire was returned by a 20-year-old woman whose name was not listed among those included in the sample. A long-distance telephone call to her mother revealed that the questionnaire had been intended for her brother.

A completed questionnaire received from a West Texas electrical engineer bore this comment: "I graduated in 1958. My spouse has already completed and mailed one of these forms -- so I took this opportunity to express my views."

Another came from the wife of a member of the sample.

A 21-year-old college student completed and returned a questionnaire intended for his roommate. The roommate, contacted by telephone, explained that he "just wanted to fill it out."

Some questionnaires were inadvertently delivered to persons whose names were identical to those of members of the sample.

"I left high school in 1933 because of the Depression," wrote a 57-year-old woman. "I had to get out and work to help my father feed my younger brothers and sister. I only finished my sophomore year. I don't believe I am the person you keep writing to."

A completed questionnaire was returned by a 30-year-old vocational counselor whose middle initial (but not middle name) was the same as that of a member of the sample. Interestingly, he gave an "unfavorable" rating in answer to the question, "How do you value the help you received from counselors in planning your courses in high school and beyond?" He gave high school counselors a "favorable" rating in answer to the question, "How do you value the help from counselors in planning for a job or career."

A 21-year-old respondent attached this note to a completed questionnaire: "Your letter said my name was given to you by the Houston Independent School District. In order to keep you straight, I will clue you in on something. I graduated with honors from Lubbock. Thank you."

Former Students Now Deceased

Sixty-nine of the former students included in the sample are known to have died since leaving high school.

Eighteen died in motor vehicle accidents; two, in other accidents. Eleven were killed in Viet Nam. Three died of natural causes. Three were the victims of slayings. Cause of death was not reported for 31 of the deceased.

CHAPTER 2

A PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

A PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table in this chapter illustrates the range of representation in the Study sample, by size of school district attended by respondents and by the year they left high school. The following observations are based upon the table:

- Only half of the responding males were married. Two-thirds of the responding females were married.
- The percentages of the females who had remained single were twice as high in large districts (Groups A through D) as the percentages of females remaining single in the small districts (Groups F and G).
- The percentages of participation in vocational curricula were significantly higher in smaller districts (30 to 52% in Groups E through G) than in larger districts (10 to 14% in Groups A through D).
- Sixty-three percent of the respondents said the community in which they lived the longest while attending elementary school was a town or city with 5,000 or more population; 18% lived in smaller towns or cities and 19% grew up in a "farm or ranch or rural area."
- Seven percent of respondents were the only child in their family; 24% had only one brother or sister; 26% had two siblings; and the remaining 43% came from families having four children or more.
- Thirty-nine percent of the respondents said they were the oldest child in the family; 31% had only one older sibling.
- Twenty-six percent of the respondents' fathers and 21% of their mothers had only a grade school education. (Because of "Not applicable or do not know" answers," these percentages may be underreported by as much as 3% for fathers and 1% for mothers.)
- In those families in which there was an "oldest" brother or sister, 26% of the oldest siblings had completed formal education equivalent to or higher than a college degree. Only 16% of the fathers and 10% of the mothers -- from the same families -- had college degrees.
- Thirty-seven percent of the 1963-64 respondents said they had a college degree or higher, in sharp contrast to the percentages given above for parents and oldest siblings.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

(Percentage figures appear beneath the frequencies to which they apply)

Characteristic	Total Sample	'64	'69	Size of School District*						
				A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Single Male	1095 21.64	273 13.60	820 26.88	219 23.98	132 22.25	143 28.82	124 19.65	291 19.89	128 20.25	58 17.57
2. Married Male	1180 23.32	680 33.89	500 16.39	180 19.71	138 23.27	82 16.53	152 24.08	360 24.60	174 27.53	94 28.48
3. Total Male**	2312 45.69	973 48.48	1337 43.82	404 44.23	275 46.36	229 46.16	281 44.52	665 45.44	304 48.09	154 46.65
4. Single Female	896 17.71	143 7.12	753 24.68	213 23.32	116 19.56	99 19.95	132 20.91	241 16.47	63 9.96	32 9.69
5. Married Female	1840 36.37	886 44.16	954 31.27	296 32.42	202 34.06	167 33.66	217 34.38	552 37.73	262 41.45	144 43.63
6. Total Female**	2746 54.27	1033 51.47	1713 56.14	509 55.74	318 53.64	267 53.84	350 55.48	798 54.56	328 51.91	176 53.35
7. High School Graduates	4850 95.81	1925 95.81	2925 95.83	898 98.38	572 96.31	490 98.40	617 97.80	1386 94.76	584 92.43	303 91.83
8. High School Dropouts	211 4.14	84 4.17	127 4.15	15 1.62	22 3.69	8 1.60	14 2.20	77 5.24	48 7.57	27 8.17

*For purposes of this discussion, school districts have been divided into seven categories, as follows:

A - 5 largest districts (Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, El Paso)
B - Other large city core districts - ADA - 15,000-50,000
C - Metro-fringe districts (suburban) - ADA - 15,000-50,000
D - Districts with ADA - 5,000-15,000
E - Districts with ADA - 1,000-5,000
F - Districts with ADA - 400-1,000
G - Districts with ADA - under 400
(Average daily attendance (ADA) is based on 1969 figures)

**Vertical columns do not add up to totals shown because some respondents were not coded as to marital status and ethnicity.

Characteristic	Total Sample	'64	'69	Size of School District						
				A	B	C	D	E	F	G
9. Black Americans	426 8.83	167 8.70	259 8.92	98 11.50	28 4.90	24 4.81	33 5.54	144 10.11	50 8.74	49 15.70
10. Mexican Americans	584 12.10	171 8.91	412 14.10	71 8.33	100 17.51	36 7.22	131 22.01	186 13.07	53 9.26	7 2.24
11. Anglo/Other Americans	3813 79.04	1580 82.36	2232 76.87	683 80.15	443 77.57	438 87.95	431 72.43	1093 76.82	469 81.98	256 82.05
12. Pre-College Curriculum	2806 55.43	1112 55.35	1692 55.43	621 68.01	387 65.16	354 71.08	408 64.65	705 48.12	255 40.34	76 23.03
13. General Education Curriculum	935 18.47	351 17.47	584 19.13	177 19.38	129 21.71	95 19.07	106 16.79	243 16.58	118 18.67	67 20.30
14. Vocational Curriculum (at least 3 years vocational courses)	1132 22.36	471 23.44	661 21.65	93 10.18	38 11.44	89 7.63	443 14.10	229 30.23	172 36.27	52.12
15. Curriculum not Ascertained	189 3.72	75 3.73	115 3.75	22 2.40	10 1.68	11 2.20	28 4.43	74 5.04	30 4.73	15 4.54
16. Size of Community in Which Respondent Lived the Longest While Attending Elementary School										
Farm, ranch, rural	939 18.54	431 21.45	508 16.64	15 1.64	21 3.53	13 2.61	54 8.55	373 25.46	242 38.29	221 66.96
Town below 5,000	914 18.05	384 19.11	529 17.33	14 1.53	21 3.53	10 2.00	70 11.09	426 29.07	299 47.31	74 22.42
Town 5,000-50,000	1439 28.42	518 25.78	920 30.14	88 9.63	114 19.19	141 28.31	427 67.67	592 40.40	51 8.06	26 7.87
City 50,000 or more	1697 33.51	645 32.10	1052 34.46	777 85.10	427 71.88	322 64.65	67 10.61	61 4.16	35 5.53	8 2.42
No Response	74 1.46	31 1.54	43 1.40	19 2.08	11 1.85	12 2.40	13 2.06	13 0.88	5 0.79	1 0.30

Characteristic	Total Sample	'64	'69	Size of School District A	B	C	D	E	F	G
17. Mobility--1972 Address is:										
In same county	2975 58.75	970 48.28	2005 65.69	676 74.04	368 61.95	322 64.65	351 55.62	762 52.01	339 53.63	157 47.57
In contiguous county	346 6.83	173 8.61	173 5.66	29 3.17	5 0.84	17 3.41	57 9.03	126 8.60	65 10.28	47 14.24
Inside Texas	1241 24.51	587 29.21	653 21.39	117 12.81	148 24.91	102 20.48	151 23.93	453 30.92	172 27.21	98 29.69
Inside U.S.	448 8.84	251 12.49	196 6.42	80 8.76	67 11.27	50 10.04	67 10.61	107 7.30	51 8.06	26 7.87
Outside U.S.	30 0.59	18 0.89	12 0.39	6 0.65	4 0.67	2 0.40	1 0.15	12 0.81	3 0.47	2 0.60
Not determined or no response	23 0.45	10 0.49	13 0.42	5 0.54	2 0.33	5 1.00	4 0.63	5 0.34	2 0.31	0
18. Number of Siblings:										
None (or no response)	334 6.59	175 8.71	159 5.20	78 8.54	36 6.06	32 6.42	44 6.97	92 6.27	32 5.06	20 6.06
One	1217 24.03	525 26.13	691 22.64	262 28.69	153 25.75	138 27.71	135 21.39	319 21.77	150 23.73	60 18.18
Two	1302 25.71	500 24.88	802 26.27	237 25.95	163 27.44	146 29.31	159 25.19	365 24.91	156 24.68	76 23.03
Three	878 17.34	337 16.77	540 17.69	150 16.42	108 18.18	76 15.26	118 18.70	260 17.74	115 18.19	51 15.45
Four or five	755 14.91	279 13.88	476 15.59	119 13.03	79 13.29	68 13.65	91 14.42	235 16.04	99 15.66	64 19.39
Six or seven	318 6.28	112 5.57	206 6.74	47 5.14	35 5.89	28 5.62	47 7.44	97 6.62	34 5.37	30 9.09
Eight or more	259 5.11	81 4.03	178 5.83	20 2.19	20 3.36	10 2.00	37 5.86	97 6.62	46 7.27	29 8.78

Characteristic	Total Sample	'64	'69	Size of School District A	B	C	D	E	F	G
19. Older Siblings:										
None (or no response)	1988 39.26	870 43.30	1117 36.59	411 45.01	246 41.41	240 48.19	241 38.19	526 35.90	218 34.49	106 32.12
One	1551 30.63	566 28.17	984 32.24	296 32.42	182 30.63	151 30.32	190 30.11	457 31.19	188 29.74	87 26.36
Two	781 15.42	267 13.29	514 16.84	130 14.23	91 15.31	67 13.45	100 15.84	228 15.56	105 16.61	60 18.18
Three	356 7.03	144 7.16	212 6.94	36 3.94	45 7.57	24 4.81	55 8.71	116 7.91	53 8.38	27 8.18
Four or five	262 5.17	113 5.62	149 4.88	29 3.17	24 4.04	9 1.80	31 4.91	93 6.34	45 7.12	31 9.39
Six or more	125 2.46	49 2.43	76 2.49	11 1.20	6 1.01	7 1.40	14 2.21	45 3.07	23 3.63	19 5.75
20. Amount of Father's Formal Schooling:										
Do not know (or no response)	430 8.49	156 7.76	273 8.94	56 6.13	32 5.38	21 4.21	47 7.44	144 9.82	87 13.76	43 13.03
No formal schooling	136 2.68	53 2.63	83 2.71	12 1.31	11 1.85	3 0.60	21 3.32	54 3.68	28 4.43	7 2.12
Some grade school (up to 8)	836 16.51	386 19.21	450 14.74	99 10.84	73 12.28	52 10.44	94 14.89	297 20.27	141 22.31	80 24.24
Completed grade school (8)	355 7.01	147 7.31	208 6.81	43 4.70	30 5.05	17 3.41	38 6.02	140 9.55	54 8.54	33 10.00
Some high school (9 to 12)	715 14.12	292 14.53	423 13.85	111 12.15	73 12.28	38 7.63	90 14.26	230 15.69	108 17.08	65 19.69
Graduated from high school	1030 20.34	407 20.25	623 20.41	201 22.01	122 20.53	116 23.29	142 22.50	257 17.54	130 20.56	62 18.78
Some college, business college, vocational or technical school	812 16.03	321 15.97	490 16.05	186 20.37	128 21.54	110 22.08	94 14.89	215 14.67	52 8.22	27 8.18
College degree or higher	749 14.79	247 12.29	502 16.44	205 22.45	125 21.04	141 28.31	105 16.64	128 8.73	32 5.06	13 3.93

Characteristic	Total Sample	'64	'69	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				Size of School District						
21. Amount of Mother's Formal Schooling:										
Do not know (or no response)	290 5.72	108 5.37	181 5.93	29 3.17	29 4.88	14 2.81	30 4.75	107 7.30	49 7.75	32 9.69
No formal schooling	157 3.10	52 2.58	105 3.44	24 2.62	12 2.02	5 1.00	30 4.75	58 3.95	22 3.48	6 1.81
Some grade school (up to 8)	551 10.88	241 11.99	310 10.15	59 6.46	49 8.24	28 5.62	78 12.36	199 13.58	93 14.71	45 13.63
Completed grade school (8)	331 6.53	144 7.16	187 6.12	36 3.94	38 6.39	16 3.21	32 5.07	132 9.01	49 7.75	28 8.48
Some high school (9 to 12)	911 17.99	369 18.36	542 17.75	144 15.77	101 17.00	74 14.85	101 16.00	269 18.36	137 21.67	85 25.75
Graduated from high school	1496 29.54	601 29.91	894 29.29	294 32.20	170 28.61	170 34.13	155 24.56	418 28.53	194 30.69	95 28.78
Some college, business college, vocational or technical school	854 16.86	321 15.97	533 17.46	217 23.76	123 20.70	114 22.89	138 21.87	177 12.08	60 9.49	25 7.57
College degree or higher	473 9.34	173 8.61	300 9.82	110 12.04	72 12.12	77 15.46	67 10.61	105 7.16	28 4.43	14 4.24
22. Amount of Oldest Sibling's Formal Schooling:										
Do not know (or no response)	1457 28.77	599 29.81	857 28.07	269 29.46	171 28.78	156 31.32	173 27.41	414 28.25	188 29.74	86 26.06
No formal schooling	7 0.13	2 0.09	5 0.16	1 0.10	1 0.16	0	0	2 0.13	3 0.47	0
Some grade school (up to 8)	71 1.40	24 1.19	47 1.53	7 0.76	6 1.01	3 0.60	11 1.74	28 1.91	9 1.42	7 2.12
Completed grade school (8)	88 1.73	35 1.74	53 1.73	15 1.64	9 1.51	2 0.40	15 2.37	29 1.97	14 2.21	4 1.21
Some high school (9 to 12)	494 9.75	182 9.05	312 10.22	75 8.21	46 7.74	36 7.22	56 8.87	143 9.76	96 15.18	42 12.72
Graduated from high school	950 18.76	376 18.71	574 18.80	154 16.86	97 16.32	85 17.06	91 14.42	304 20.75	135 21.36	84 25.45
Some college, business college, vocational or technical school	1055 20.83	389 19.36	666 21.82	183 20.04	131 22.05	110 22.08	161 25.51	291 19.86	116 18.35	63 19.09
College degree or higher	941 18.58	402 20.00	538 17.62	209 22.89	133 22.39	106 21.28	124 19.65	254 17.33	71 11.23	44 13.33

The levels of education attained, generation to generation, continue to rise. The older siblings, in the families included in this Study, had attained much higher levels of formal education than either parent. The following percentages, for the highest levels of formal education attained, differ from those in the preceding table because the "Not applicable; do not know" responses are excluded:

Amount of Formal Schooling	Percentage Completing the Levels Shown		
	Father	Mother	Oldest Brother or Sister
No formal schooling	2.9%	3.3%	0.2%
Some grade school	18.0	11.5	2.0
Completed grade school	7.7	6.9	2.4
Some high school	15.4	19.1	13.7
High school graduate	22.2	31.3	26.3
Some college, business or vocational school or technical training	17.5	17.9	29.3
College degree or higher	16.2	9.9	26.1

Mobility

Educators who plan job training programs want to know whether trainees remain in the community where they attend high school. The following percentages, derived from the number of this Study's respondents found to be living in the same county in which they attended high school, indicate the relationship which exists between post-high school mobility and size of school district.

Size of District	Pct. in County	Size of District	Pct. in County
50,000+ ADA	74%	1,000 - 4,999 ADA	52%
15,000 - 49,999 ADA	63	400 - 999	54
5,000 - 14,999 ADA	56	Under 400	48

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS RELATED TO HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS RELATED TO HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Both 1963-64 and 1968-69 groups gave their highest approval to courses in which practical skills were taught. For the entire sample, the rank order of approval given to high school courses is as follows:

Subject Area	Unfav.	Neither Fav. Nor Unfav.	Fav.	Percent Favorable
Vocational Agriculture	69	106	545	77.7%
Vocational Office/Business	50	107	559	76.1
Typing, Shorthand	273	655	2,637	74.0
Bookkeeping	219	299	1,401	73.0
Vocational Homemaking	207	267	1,272	72.9
Fine Arts	346	604	2,058	68.4
Vocational Industrial Ed.	66	101	338	66.9
English, Literature	663	1,018	3,250	65.9
Vocational Distrib. Ed.	55	110	315	65.6
Health & Physical Ed.	671	990	2,996	64.3
Mathematics	773	1,071	3,009	62.0
Natural Sciences	660	1,216	2,909	60.8
Social Sciences	719	1,213	2,865	59.7
Vocational Health Occups.	59	100	209	56.8
Foreign Languages	926	840	1,603	47.6

Ratings of Specific Courses

Each respondent was asked to rate each of his high school courses on a three-point scale: "Favorable," "Neither Favorable Nor Unfavorable," or "Unfavorable." Each also had the option of checking another column headed "Not Applicable or No Opinion." The following discussion of ratings is based on a comparison of the frequencies in only the two columns headed "Favorable" and "Unfavorable." An 8:1 approval, for example, indicates that there were approximately 8 times more favorable than unfavorable responses.

Bookkeeping: Overall approval was 6:1, ranging from the highest ratios of 10:1 for Group D* and 9:1 for the 1969 Mexican Americans, down to an approval of only 2½:1 voiced by the Dropouts (both years). Above-average approval (all 8:1) came from Group C, the 1964 Blacks, the 1969 Blacks, the 1964 Vocational Students, and the 1964 Married Females.

English, Literature: Overall approval was 5:1. Highest approvals came from the 1964 Married Females (8 1/2:1) and the 1969 Single Females (8:1). Lowest approval came from the 1969 Married Males (2 1/2:1), the 1964 Married Males (3:1), the 1964 Single Males (3:1), the General Education group of 1964 (3 1/2:1) and the 1969 Dropouts (3 1/2:1). The 1964 Single Females gave above-average approval (6 1/2:1).

Fine Arts: Overall approval was 6:1. Highest approvals came from Groups C (9:1) and D (10:1). Lowest approvals came from Groups F (3 1/2:1) and G (2 1/2:1), 1964 Single Males (3:1), the 1964 Blacks (3 1/2:1), and the Dropouts of both years (3 1/2:1).

(Had Fine Arts been considered by individual subjects, the overall approval ratios would have been: Drama, 17:1; Music, 10:1; Art, 8:1; and Speech, 6 1/2:1.)

Foreign Languages: Overall approval was only 1 1/2:1. This area received 926 "Unfavorable" ratings, a significantly higher negative response than was given to any other area of the curriculum. (Mathematics had 773 "Unfavorable" responses, followed by the Social Sciences with 719.) Despite the "Unfavorable" responses, however, the favorable opinions toward Foreign Languages were in the majority in 32 of the 33 sub-groups that were analyzed. "Favorable" and "Unfavorable" ratings were tied 39 to 39 in group G. The highest ratings came from the Mexican Americans of both years (4:1) and from the Blacks of both years (2 1/2:1).

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* Refer to footnote of table on Page 2-2 for "Group" identifications.

Health and Physical Education: Overall approval was 4 1/2:1, with support coming predominantly from the small and medium-sized school districts (Groups D and E 5:1, Group F 6:1, and Group G 9:1), from the Mexican Americans (8:1 in 1964, 8 1/2:1 in 1969), the Blacks (7:1 in 1964, 6 1/2:1 in 1969), and from the 1964 Dropouts (11 1/2:1). An interesting phenomenon was the low approval ratio from single persons (3 1/2:1) as compared to the above-average approval from married persons (almost 5 1/2:1). The singles' vs. the marrieds' opinions in this area appeared to be consistent within all eight of the sub-groups in which sex and marital status were considered. The marrieds gave a total of 1,861 "Favorable" responses to 350 "Unfavorable" responses. The singles responded favorably by 1,106 to 312. The Single Females of 1969 gave the lowest approval ratio, 3:1.

Mathematics: Despite the above-mentioned heavy turnout of "Unfavorable" opinions, Mathematics emerged with an overall approval ratio of 4:1. Between-group comparisons revealed very small deviations, indicating that the state-wide opinions concerning Mathematics appear to be about the same, whatever the group or size of school district. Dropouts gave slightly less than average approval. Highest approval ratios of 5:1 came from the Married Males of both years, the General Education students of 1964, and the 1969 Mexican Americans. None of the deviations from the overall sample average appear to be significantly large.

Vocational Agriculture: Overall approval ratio was 11:1, virtually the same in 1964 and 1969. From groups containing the small- to medium-sized districts (group E, F, and G) there were 469 "Favorable" responses to 29 "Unfavorable," an approval ratio of 15:1. Although 48 "Favorable" and 13 "Unfavorable" responses came from females, their approval ratio of slightly under 4:1 tended to pull the overall ratio down. Combined married persons approved 12:1 (338 to 28); combined single persons approved 9:1 (205 to 22).

Vocational Distributive Education: Overall approval ratio was 6:1. The 6 1/2:1 approval given by the 1969 respondents contrasts with the 4:1 approval from the 1964 respondents. Combined females approved by 8 1/2:1 (170 to 20), and combined males approved by 4:1 (140 to 35). Highest approvals came in Groups D (10:1) and B (9:1).

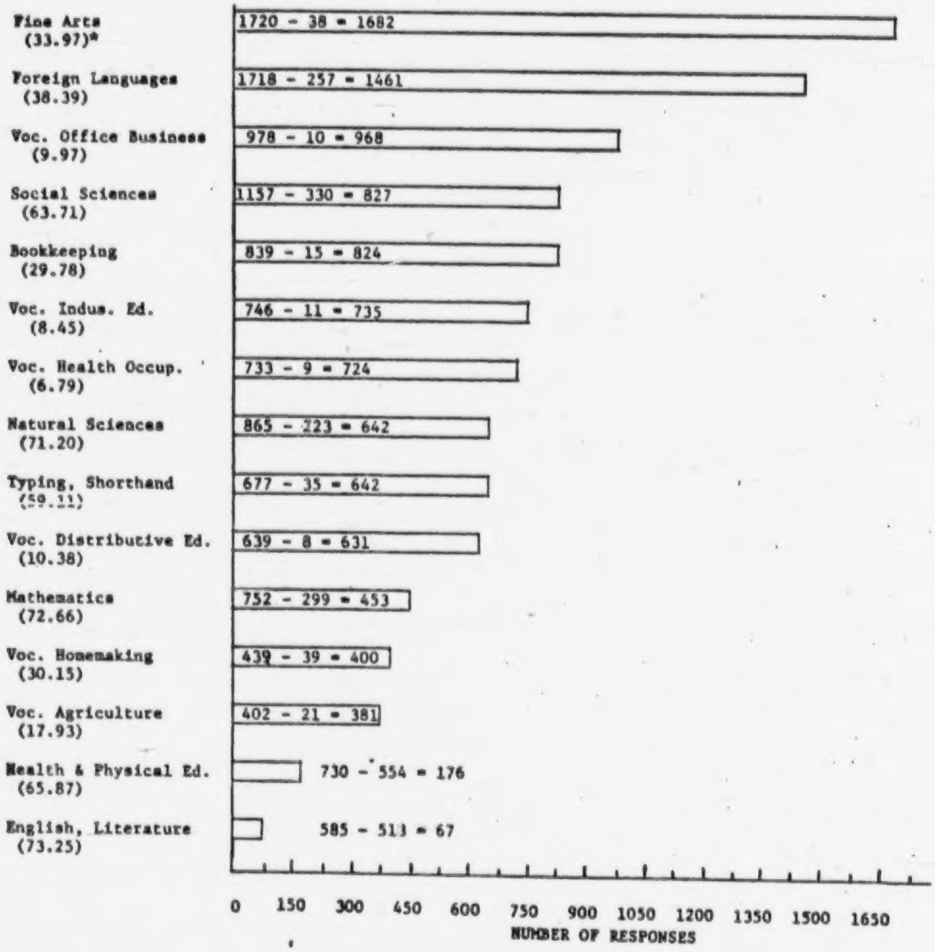
Vocational Health Occupations: Overall approval ratio was 4 1/2:1. The 4 1/2:1 approval by 1969 respondents contrasts with the 2:1 approval given by 1969 Single Females, 14:1 by 1969 Blacks, and 11:1 by 1969 Dropouts. In the entire sample, by sex, the males approved by 62 to 28, and the females approved by 144 to 31.

Vocational Homemaking: Overall approval ratio was 6:1. Approval ratio from both 1964 and 1969 respondents was also 6:1. Combined Blacks approved 18:1, combined Mexican Americans approved 9:1, and combined Dropouts approved 7:1. The 1964 Vocational Students approved 10:1, and the 1969 Vocational Students approved 16:1. Although males reacted favorably (65 to 23), they were less enthusiastic than the females (1,185 to 182, or a 6½:1 ratio).

Vocational Industrial Education: Overall approval ratio was 5:1. The 1964 respondents reacted favorably 4:1, and the 1969 respondents, 6:1. Highest approvals came from school districts with an average daily attendance of more than 5,000 (Groups A, B, C, and D gave approvals of 8:1 to 15:1). Approval of only 2:1 came from Groups F and G (the smallest districts). Single Females approved by 26 to 1 (actual count), and Married Females approved by 41 to 20. Males overall approved by 256 to 45.

Vocational Office/Business Education: Overall approval ratio was 8:1. The 1964 respondents approved 7:1, and the 1969 respondents approved 8 1/2:1. Highest approvals (in actual frequency) came from the 1969 Single Females (20 to 0), the 1964 Mexican Americans (17 to 0), the 1969 General Education group (14 to 1), and Group D (81 to 4). Combined females approved by 13:1 (459 to 34), and combined males approved by 3:1 (103 to 35).

Each ex-student was asked whether his high school had offered too many, about the right amount, or not enough courses in 15 subject areas. The following "net demand" summary resulted from subtracting the "too many courses" responses from the "not enough courses" responses:



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* Under each subject area named is the percentage of respondents who indicated that "About the Right Amount" of courses were offered by the high school.

Slightly more than 30% (1,529) of the respondents reported that their opinions had changed concerning the value of courses they took in high school. Of these, 1,343 named specific courses about which opinions had changed.

The direction of opinion changes was favorable for all subject areas except Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Foreign Languages, and Health and Physical Education. The chief targets of negative reactors were History, Chemistry, and Spanish. Highest favorable opinion changes were toward Bookkeeping (90%), Typing/Shorthand (86%), Vocational Industrial Education (73%), Vocational Office/Business (69%), and Vocational Homemaking (68%).

Respondents were asked to indicate "as precisely as possible the courses you wanted and could not take" and "the courses you now wish that you had not taken." The responses to those questions (pages 5-6) illustrate the dilemma facing the school administrator desiring articulated programs that do more than just meet the greatest needs of the greatest numbers of students. For example, offsetting the 428 regrets because they took a foreign language were 445 "precise" indications that a foreign language was the course most desired but not taken.

Similarly, from the same total of 5,063 respondents came 410 regrets for having taken Mathematics and 327 indications that a Mathematics course was the one most desired but not taken. Forty-six wanted advanced Mathematics. While 111 regretted having taken Biology, 52 wish now that they had taken it; 42 of those who took it would like to have had more advanced work in Biology. While 196 regretted having taken Chemistry, 84 now wish that they had taken it; 34 of those who took it would like to have had more advanced work in Chemistry.

Summarized on the next two pages is the information obtained from 2,669 respondents who took courses they now wish they had not taken, and from 4,780 who said they wanted some course which they did (could) not take.

NUMBER WHO NOW WISH THEY HAD NOT TAKEN THIS COURSE*			NUMBER WHO WANTED TO TAKE THIS COURSE BUT DID NOT OR COULD NOT	
=	7	(Auto) Mechanics	106	===========
=	13	Office Education	99	==========
===	28	Industrial Shops	87	=========
=	5	Computer, Data P.	61	======
	3	Agriculture	55	======
==	18	Distributive Ed.	53	=====
==	17	Drafting	42	====
	1	Electronics, Elect.	38	====
	0	Health Careers	36	====
=	7	Cosmetology	28	===
===============	145	Homemaking	93	=========
	2	Crafts and Trades	17	==
	3	Photography	16	==
	2	Commercial Art	9	=
	3	Other Vocat.,Tech.	83	========
========	83	Bkkpg, Accounting	255	=======================++
=	10	Business Law, Law	22	==
========	77	Shorthand	170	=================
=========	86	Typing	137	===========+++
==	24	Other Business	282	============================
==	20	Sociology	278	============================
=	12	Psychology	248	=========================
===	34	Economics	95	==========
============	116	Civics, Gov'ment	51	=====
=================	171	History	73	======+
=	13	Other Soc. Sci.	56	======
	1	Humanities	34	===
	1	Philosophy	33	===
	3	Religion, Bible	16	==
=	7	Calculus	120	============
====	41	Trigonometry	37	====
=============	131	Geometry	16	==
++===========	128	Algebra	20	=+
=	11	Related Math	1	
+========	92	Math, unspecified	179	=============+++++
==========	96	Physical Education	56	======
====	39	Health (Sciences)	37	====
===	0	Sex Education	25	===
	2	Physiology	12	=
	1	Driver Education	12	=
=	8	R.O.T.C.	5	=

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*Each = or + sign on the graph represents ten responses or major fraction thereof. The + sign identifies advanced versions of the courses.

(continued from previous page)

NUMBER WHO NOW WISH THEY HAD NOT TAKEN THIS COURSE			NUMBER WHO WANTED TO TAKE THIS COURSE BUT DID NOT OR COULD NOT	
===========	111	Biology	94	=====++++
====================	196	Chemistry	118	========++++
=======	73	Physics	105	==========+
==	15	General Science	7	=
	0	Geology	14	=
	0	Anatomy	12	=
	0	Zoology	5	=
======	55	Other Sciences	65	======+
+++===========	138	English, Literat.	188	================+++
=	13	Journalism	41	====
	3	Reading	10	=
=====	50	Speech (Debate)	129	=============
=	11	Drama	67	=======
======	63	Music	111	==========+
===	32	Art	183	=================+
	0	Fine Arts, unspec.	42	====
=====	53	French	76	=======+
==	23	German	53	=====
	0	Russian	11	=
+==================	189	Spanish	71	======+
==========	104	Latin	14	=
======	59	Langs., unspec.	220	======================
	0	Education	12	=
	1	Architecture	6	=
	0	Anthropology	13	=
	2	Geography	5	=
	0	Statistics	5	=
	0	Archeology	3	
	0	Ecology	3	
	0	Engineering	4	

Not represented in the above compilation were the 17 respondents who said they wish now they had not taken "study hall" and a miscellany of requests for courses in astrology, pro-humanism, penmanship, wildlife, forestry, science fiction, human relations, human behavior, consumer education, lip reading, writing for children, fashions, film production, oceanography, "Tex-Mex," and charm. The "Humanities" total on the graph includes about a dozen requests each for Chicano and Black studies.

The following percentages of teacher approval, by subject areas, are based only upon the ratings by the ex-students who took a stand; they do not include "Neither Favorable Nor Unfavorable" and "No Opinion" responses.

Subject Area	No. of Responses Favoring Teacher	Unfavorable Responses	Per Cent Favorable
Voc. Office/Business	475	37	92.8%
Voc. Industrial Ed.	278	24	92.1
Voc. Agriculture	512	57	90.0
Fine Arts	2,092	281	88.2
Bookkeeping	1,338	193	87.4
Typing, Shorthand	2,553	393	86.7
Voc. Distributive Ed.	255	45	85.0
Voc. Health Occupations	174	31	84.9
English, Literature	3,450	621	84.8
Natural Sciences	3,176	602	84.1
Voc. Homemaking	1,111	216	83.7
Social Sciences	3,115	620	83.4
Mathematics	3,048	749	80.3
Health & Physical Ed.	2,839	715	79.9
Foreign Languages	1,776	693	71.9

Respondents from all ethnic groups and districts of all sizes joined positively in giving an overall favorable endorsement (by an 8:1 ratio) to their teachers. Only slightly less enthusiastic were the dropouts of both years, who gave 5:1 approval to their teachers.

Seldom left unanswered was an open-ended question asking for the name and subject of the "best teacher" and the reasons for the selection. The following characteristics of the "best" teachers are listed, along with the percentage of the total response represented by each characteristic:

Ability to communicate with students and to create interest (38%)
Interest in students as individuals (24%)
Knowledge of subject matter (9.7%)
Dedication to teaching (7%)
Presentation of a challenge (4.6%)
Maintenance of discipline in the classroom (3.4%)
Personality, including sense of humor (3.8%)
Ability to prepare students for college (3.2%)
Fair and equal treatment of students (2.8%)
Ability to relate subject matter to students' lives (1.3%)

The applause for teachers was not universal. In response to an open-ended question concerning school improvement, 416 respondents (approximately 8% of the total) were critical of teacher performance. Suggestions for improving the quality of teaching came from 498 (slightly less than 10% of sample). The following tables show how these criticisms and suggestions were distributed by size of school district.

	Size of School District*							
Criticisms	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
Teachers should show more concern for students as individuals.	26	19	14	11	41	8	7	126
Better student-teacher communication is needed.	15	20	15	12	28	16	3	109
Teaching methods should be improved.	13	9	8	15	13	5	2	65
Teachers should be able to stimulate more interest.	9	6	4	5	8	4	2	38
Teachers should treat all students equally and fairly.	9	2	3	3	10	4	2	33
Teachers should put more emphasis on discipline in the classroom.	3	7	2	1	5	5	3	26
Teachers should put less emphasis on discipline in the classroom.	2	3	5	4	2	3	0	19
								416
Needed Improvements								
Employ better teachers.	37	36	29	38	90	52	31	313
Employ younger teachers.	0	3	1	12	13	6	3	38
Dismiss or retire older teachers.	2	1	3	5	10	3	4	28
Dismiss or retire teachers who "work only for the pay check."	3	3	1	3	5	7	0	22
Dismiss or retire incompetent teachers.	3	4	2	2	6	3	0	21
Improve teachers' salaries.	1	2	1	6	6	4	0	20
Be more selective in employing teachers.	2	1	4	4	4	3	1	19
Review teacher qualifications and effectiveness periodically.	3	1	4	3	5	3	0	19
Take athletic coaches out of academic classrooms.	2	2	1	2	6	4	1	18
								498

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* These seven categories of district size were used:
A-- 5 largest (Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, El Paso)
B-- Other large city core districts (15,000 - 50,000 A.D.A.)
C-- Metro-fringe districts (15,000 - 50,000 A.D.A.)
D-- 5,000 - 14,999 A.D.A.; E--1,000-4,999 A.D.A.; F--400 - 999 A.D.A.;
G-- 0 - 399 A.D.A. The A.D.A. figures used were for 1968-69.

Respondents who had contact with counselors seriously questioned the adequacy of assistance they received from counselors "in planning your courses in high school and beyond" and "in planning a job or career." A typical comment was, "Counselors are often way too forceful and seem to skip the fact of what the individual wants to do and try to make him want to do what his tests show he can do."

A college senior, who recently became the first Mexican American accepted by a Kansas law school, recalled being told as a sophomore in high school that he was not college material. A cliff-hanging college student made this comment: "I took a test to see if I could go to college. I didn't pass them (sic). I was told you had to pass to go to college. Well, now I'm in college and I just finished my second semester with a 'C' average. I don't think tests should be given."

The tabulation of more than 3,000 ratings of counselors' assistance indicated relatively higher approval of their work in 1968-69 than in 1963-64:

Counselors' Assistance in Planning Courses

Group	Unfavorable Responses		Neither Fav. Nor Unfav.		Fav. Responses	
1963-64	534	44.8%	292	24.5%	366	30.7%
1968-69	860	39.1	511	23.2	830	37.7

Counselors' Assistance in Planning for a Job or Career

Group	Unfavorable Responses		Neither Fav. Nor Unfav.		Fav. Responses	
1963-64	509	49.5	276	26.8	244	23.7
1968-69	841	45.5	486	26.3	521	28.2

In their open-ended comments related to improving the schools, the ex-students generally recommended that more counseling be provided, not only in career and course planning, but also in the area of personal counseling. The questionnaire did not elicit responses in the area of personal counseling, nor did it ask for a total evaluation of counselors.

Slightly more than one-half of the respondents (2,550 of 5,063) reacted favorably toward their high school principals. There were 840 unfavorable responses, resulting in an approval ratio of 3:1.

Respondents gave overwhelming approval to extracurricular activities in which they participated. Varsity Athletics received the highest favorable reaction (84%), followed by Student Publications (80%), Intramural Athletics (78%), Drama Club/Group (78%), Band/Orchestra (78%), Vocational Organizations (76%), Choral/Voice/Music (76%), Drill Team/Pep Squad (75%), Student Government (70%), Academic Clubs (60%), and Future Teachers Clubs (59%).

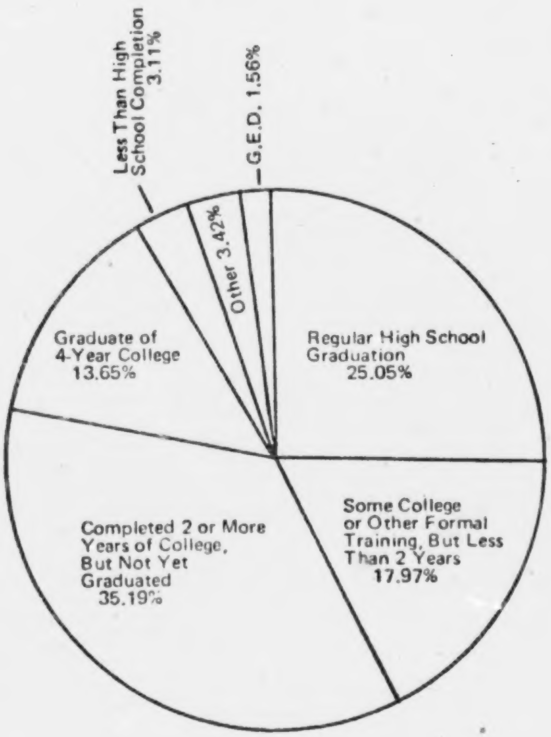
Many non-participants were critical of Varsity Athletics, advocating more activities for women and non-participating males. An often-repeated criticism from non-participants was the overemphasis of athletics in comparison with academic programs. The smaller the school district, the larger was the percentage of students participating in extracurricular activities and the higher the percentages of approval given to these programs.

Boredom, or lack of interest, was cited as the major reason for dropouts by those who had not dropped out. Other reasons for dropping out cited by the graduates were (in order of frequency) family problems and lack of parental guidance, financial problems, apathy or hostility on the part of teachers and other school personnel, emotional problems, "irrelevancy of school," lack of motivation, marriage and/or pregnancy, poor grades, insufficient opportunity for vocational training, and desire for independence.

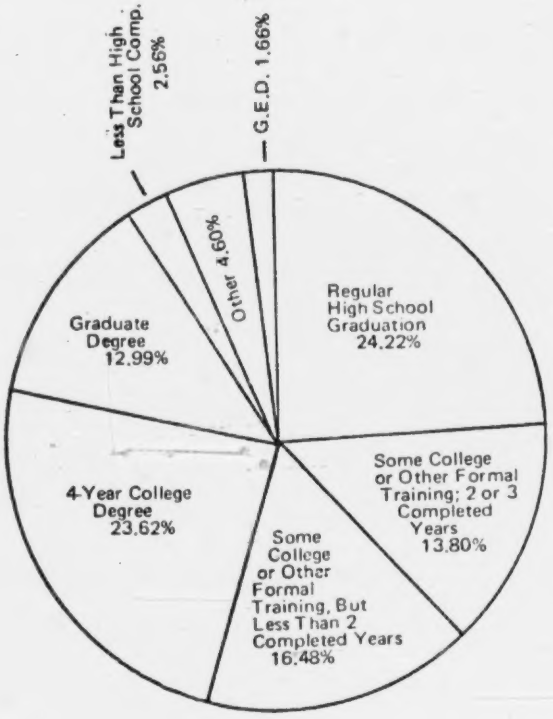
The most prevalent reason for dropping out cited by the dropouts themselves was marriage and/or pregnancy. Other reasons they gave (in order of frequency) were lack of interest in classes, financial problems, conflict with school authorities, problems at home, inability to relate high school to the "real" world, death or major illness in the family, exclusion from social or other status-conferring activities, inadequate preparation for high school, and general dissatisfaction with school.

High school graduation was the terminal point in the formal education of approximately one-fourth of the respondents for both years. The highest levels of formal education or training achieved are summarized:

1968-69



1963-64



CHAPTER 4

THE HIGH SCHOOL'S PREPARATORY ROLE

"I think the courses should give the students a broad sample of many occupations to make it easier to pick a career. I also think the students shouldn't be pushed into going to college. That is, that he won't get anywhere in life if he doesn't go."

THE HIGH SCHOOL'S PREPARATORY ROLE

Most former students surveyed for this Study were content with their high school's effectiveness in preparing them for further formal schooling; a significant minority (1,060 or 23.5% of total responses to the question) expressed dissatisfaction with their school's effectiveness in preparing them for a job. The following statistics tell the story:

Effectiveness of High School in:	Unfavorable		Neither Favorable Nor Unfavorable		Favorable	
	Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
Preparing Student For Further Formal Education	645	14.2%	937	18.5%	2,966	65.2%
Preparing Student For a Job	1,060	23.5	1,294	28.6	2,165	47.9

(Excluded from the calculations of above percentages were 515 "Not Applicable or No Opinion" responses to the formal education question and 544 such responses to the job question.)

Respondents from small districts were highly favorable toward their schools, especially as they related to preparation for good citizenship and enjoying life. Small schools also led large schools in the percentage of their ex-students rating courses favorably for "holding your interest," but they lagged far behind the large-city districts in the ratings they received for "courses preparing you for further formal schooling." Middle-sized districts (5,000 - 14,999 A.D.A.) achieved the highest ratings and the five largest districts the lowest ratings on the "relevance of courses to your plans and interests." Married females generally were happier with their high school courses than other sub-groups.

The following summary of responses is based upon the entire sample:

Criteria for Rating Courses	Unfavorable		Neither Favorable Nor Unfavorable		Favorable	
	Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
Preparing Student To Enjoy Life	547	12.6%	1,425	32.8%	2,372	54.6%
Preparing for Good Citizenship	418	9.2	1,211	26.7	2,903	64.1
Relevance "to your plans and interests"	876	19.5	1,438	32.1	2,167	48.4
Holding "your interest"	674	14.2	1,597	33.7	2,469	52.1

("Not Applicable or No Opinion" responses excluded from the percentage calculations above were 719, "Enjoying Life"; 531, "Citizenship"; 582, "Relevance"; and 323, "Holding Interest.")

Although persons expressing dissatisfaction with the preparatory role of the high school were definitely in the minority, they were less inclined than the satisfied respondents to suffer in silence, as the various open-ended responses which follow will indicate.

Comments Concerning College Preparation

"A wider variety of foreign languages and a few more 'solid' courses --extra electives -- would benefit students going to college."

"We need more advanced math courses for those going to college."

"Have more social sciences and a greater variety of English -- special composition courses are very necessary to success in college."

"Make English programs standard. It's suicide to go to college without a world literature background."

"Provide more subjects like chemistry and foreign language so you would be more prepared for college."

"The school is small and therefore cannot offer courses that larger schools can. I found that the students from larger schools had a chance for so many courses and that college was tuned to them."

"I feel that the high school should offer more advanced courses for preparing the student for college."

"Better preparation for college would be helpful, especially in theme writing, interpretation of literature, and more varied selection of subjects."

"College English required me to write more composition than I was prepared for."

"They should offer more fields in which students will be going to college for. It will help them in college."

"Offer more college prep courses."

"For students wanting a college degree, more advanced subjects should be taught in mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences."

"Have a broader course of study to better prepare those who want to continue their education at the college level, as well as those who do not."

Comments Concerning Teaching Methodology

"Teach more like in college, or like teachers teach in a college, so students don't have to adjust so much."

"It would have been beneficial to me if speech had been required of the college-bound students, or if teachers had had students get up in front of the class to give reports. I was unprepared for that area of college requirements." (Another respondent cited reports in front of the class as a factor in the dropping out of some students who felt they were shabbily or unstylishly dressed.)

"Now most colleges request the students to discuss questions and problems in class, and also have debates in class between students. When I was in high school, if the student opened his mouth, he usually got thumped."

"In order to conform more with college style and to allow the student to use more of his acquired skills, I think the high school testing system should change from being one of an objective nature to one that is more subjective (essay)."

"One thing is to require that all high school students take finals. This would help the student to know how to study for finals and large tests when he goes to college -- aid in studying a large amount of material."

Comments Concerning Study Habits and Techniques

"Students should be taught how to study so college won't be such a great change."

"Help the students realize the importance of learning things in high school, because they'll have it all over again in college."

"The schools need better training for college-bound students as far as study habits and techniques."

Comments Concerning A "College-Type" Atmosphere

"Have an open campus system, like in a university system. It instills more discipline as to class attendance, formation of a learning habit by desire, not pupil personel (sic). This discipline is needed as to college or work after high school."

"Give the students more responsibility, more independence, to acquaint them with college life, or life in general."

"My school needed to enlighten students on what college really is. It pushed preparing for college, but I was lost when I started."

"A small orientation course for students going to college is needed."

Preparation for College Vs. Career Education

More than four percent of the respondents who offered suggestions for changing the schools suggested that some students are victims of school systems that overemphasize preparation for college and give little attention to vocational or career education.

Generally, the former students who presented this viewpoint expressed the feeling that their needs had been ignored by the schools. Some said they felt they were being "pressured" to prepare for college rather than for a vocation. Others said that college-bound students also need training in a vocation.

Typical comments include the following:

"Hopefully, the school will teach subjects more related to jobs without a college degree. Almost every teacher spoke of 'when you go to college.'"

"High school did not prepare students for a job if they were not going to college. I believe more vocational subjects should be offered. Not everyone should be encouraged or pushed into college."

"Schools should be offering more vocational courses, of all types, for both sexes. Not everyone wants to go to college!"

"I believe they should have more vocational training so students could get a job when they finish high school, instead of having to go to college."

"A set college curriculum is not applicable for many students. Some would do better if allowed to train as carpenters, etc."

"The system of no vocational schools is sick. Some people don't want to go to college."

"Instead of preparing 90 percent of the students for college, they should be preparing their students for some type of vocation and life in general."

"More importance should be placed on entering vocational training schools, and high schools should help counsel students to pursue fulfilling jobs. I feel that only about 20 percent of high school students should prepare for degrees in senior college. Better and more efficient ways should be developed to train the student for a vocation after and during high school."

"My high school prepared me very well for college -- but I would have liked more practical experience courses."

"The courses offered for college-bound students did not cover enough material, and no courses were required that would enable a college dropout to go to work."

"College degrees seem to be losing importance today, and vocational programs could be beneficial."

"The high school needs to put more emphasis on skills and less emphasis on college required courses."

"Less emphasis on college-prep courses. More technical training which is practical -- I don't mean just business courses."

"Give proper education for trades for students whose parents cannot afford further education. Not all students are college material."

"Offer vocational courses to train people for jobs, other than college degrees. Not every person can afford a college education."

"Offer more courses in business, nursing, etc., so the ones who can't afford to go to college can benefit from the courses above."

"Not all students go to college, and this school needs to realize that it offers no vocational or any training to such students."

"I believe that a school should prepare the student for an outside life, because it is known that not 50% of high school graduates ever graduate from college."

"My high school needs vocational courses like machine shop, etc., industrial training, because all students are not college material."

"Have more courses to help those unable to attend college be ready to find a job and have the right qualifications."

"I think too much importance is placed on college. More vocational training is needed."

"Instigate vocational programs to help train those who cannot attend college to get good jobs."

"Offer more courses applicable to everyday jobs. Not everyone wants a job that requires a degree."

"A wider variety of technical courses need to be offered to the college-bound student and the stigma needs to be removed from those students who do not plan to attend college."

"Give courses for which a student can work at good jobs which require training but little college or no college."

"In my opinion the high school I attended could be much more beneficial if it would stop placing so much emphasis on formal education and place more emphasis on actual vocations."

"High school does not prepare a person for earning a living, only for going to college."

"At the time I attended high school they did not have enough courses to prepare a person for anything other than college. With courses of this type and maybe additional courses such as business to add to what little you already know (the students could benefit)."

"Have more vocational studies for students, because colleges cannot hold all these students, and some come out without hope of finding work. With the majors they have, vocational training would be favorable for most but not all."

"I think the courses should give the students a broad sample of many occupations to make it easier to pick a career. I also think the student shouldn't be pushed into going to college. That is, that he won't get anywhere in life if he doesn't go. I think he should be told the truth, that there are many jobs that are available for technically-trained persons other than a college graduate."

"Perhaps a better vocational training program would be useful for many students, but I am not qualified to say. High school doesn't prepare one much for a specific job, which is probably bad for those not heading for college."

"No saleable skills are taught. The staff is aimed at teaching college preparation, not life preparation."

"The total school program was designed for the student preparing to go on to college. The others were passed by."

"The general high school curriculum is college-oriented, fine for people like me who wish to go on. However, more attention needs to be given to the vocational student in high school, especially since there seems to be more in this category, according to my limited experience. Too many of these students find themselves unprepared upon leaving high school. Many go on to college when they aren't really suited to such a pursuit."

"Schools today need to offer courses that students who are not pursuing a career that requires formal college education can take and become a part of the labor force."

"Better training for job-oriented subjects. Less emphasis placed on 'college is a necessity for life.'"

"Institute more programs for people who are not interested in attending college and get away from the primarily college-oriented high school."

"More stress on job training, rather than college prep. The majority of the young people in this area will not go to college. I think a school which would train a young person in a trade or art with a minimum of college (would be beneficial)."

"Have more vocational courses instead of assuming everyone was going to college."

"There should be more training courses available such as the like of D.E. or V.O.E. for students not planning to go to college that would help them in getting a job because nowadays a person applying for employment must state experience and a person just out of high school really has not enough or no experience needed in obtaining work. This kind of teaching and schooling in my opinion would create more interest in school and create more determination in a person to further his education. This way a lot of unnecessary subjects that would not and do not help in getting a job could be made electives."

"All schools need vocational courses to prepare kids to make a living. The college is for the birds."

Preparation for Jobs or Careers

More than 24 percent of the former students responding to the open-ended question concerning suggestions for changing schools advocated the addition or expansion of vocational training programs for high school students.

Almost four percent of the former students commenting on factors that cause students to drop out of school cited a lack of opportunity for vocational training in the high school.

The following are typical comments made in response to the two open-ended questions:

"I think some (dropouts) quit because their (sic) not interested in English, Math, etc. unless they can take some things they enjoy, like mechanics, electronics, welding, agriculture, carpentry, etc."

"Some schools do not offer vocational courses students are interested in for a career."

"The system is not designed to fit their (the dropouts') needs. Many need vocational training but are thrown in with students planning to go to college."

"School fails to offer them (the dropouts) what they need and want. The student feels one year or semester is enough preparation for what they need for their future job preparation."

"In my opinion, high school does not give the student any idea of the opportunities available if you are going to work when you finish your education. I had no idea what I wanted to do or be. I didn't know of the things available that would (or would not) need special education. I think high schools should have a course that does nothing but tell you about all different kinds of job opportunities and what they are about. This would have certainly helped me decide what I wanted to do and give me the opportunity to begin studies toward the goal set up at that time. I was 25 years old before I knew my goal and what I wanted to be. Isn't that kind of late?"

"Our high school was aimed mainly at the people who wanted to go to college. It offered very little to the person who plans to begin working when he graduates."

"School offers too few opportunities for training in fields which non-college-bound students might be interested in."

"Not every student is academically-minded. Provisions should be made for those students also."

"They (dropouts) see no use for the things they have to take. They are wanting to find something they can use later when they get out of school -- a trade."

"It would be a strong motivation for students to finish school if they could relate it to a future job or career. Obviously, the student interested in becoming a mechanic or beautician is not interested in the usual college-preparatory classes."

"The few vocational programs were outdated, or had few students finding a job in the field they were trained in."

"Most high school curricula prepare students for college (not very well), but not vocational opportunities. Students who do not have aptitude or desires for a job that requires a degree should be tested for vocational aptitudes and guided in this direction. Vocational-minded students should not be treated like second class citizens."

"School don't (sic) offer enough training to prepare individuals in some type of trade or skill. The reason most students didn't finish high school was that they had no interest in the academic phase of school. If we would have had a trade or vocational school, a lot more students would have stayed in school. Actually, our high schools offered very little in preparing a student for the job market. Everyone took basic courses directed toward college preparation, rather than learning a saleable skill."

"Perhaps one way to promote a greater interest would be to offer more vocational or industrial courses for them (potential dropouts) to train in."

"School needs an increase in vocational education and a better arrangement of classes in order to permit a student to take any course without conflict with other courses."

"It should teach more in the way of careers. Like auto mechanics, and beauty classes."

"The emphasis should be on the individual's career goal, rather than a broad education."

"More emphasis should be put on vocational training for those who wish to pursue their studies in practical jobs."

"More business courses and business machines should be available."

"Have vocational courses such as beauty school, and better homemaking courses."

"I would like to see more vocational courses."

"Have more courses that deal with on-the-job training, such as cosmetology, or barber training, etc."

"Have more field trips to introduce the 'outside world,' see different occupations in action or have speakers to discuss various job opportunities, and let students see what they want to do and how to prepare for it before their senior year."

"Classes could be offered to help a person specialize in a skill or trade."

"Have more trade schooling."

"More craft training for those who do not wish to go to college."

Suggestions for Separate Curricula

A statistical trace (less than one percent) of the former students responding to the open-ended question on suggestions for changing the schools said that separate curricula should be established for college-bound and vocational students.

The following are typical of their comments:

"The school needs two programs. One for college orientation and one for the vocational-oriented. Many common courses would be appropriate. I found that, for college success and probably for success in many jobs, a better preparation in paper writing and technical reading, as well as oral presentation or expression, would have been useful."

"I believe high school should be split into two schools; one for learning trades, the other for those interested in higher education."

"Subdivide into those who plan to go to college and those who want vocational training. Do not imply that those who do not go to college are somehow failures."

"Diversify the courses. Allow for advanced classes in academic areas and career-oriented classes for students not going to college."

"Have several courses of study -- one for the college-bound students, one for vocational training, one for high school graduates only."

"Have two different programs of schooling -- one with certain required courses for the college-bound student, and another open curriculum for a technical degree."

Comments From the Satisfied

"I feel my high school education was valuable and relevant to my future (college)."

"I am a self-employed farmer. I think I was well-prepared not only for college, but also for the occupation I chose."

"As for me, my high school offered enough courses."

"I feel the program given by my high school was good, and it was the individual's fault if he did not benefit from it."

"There is nothing I can see now that could have made my high school any better. We were exposed to the best that could be afforded and we made good use of everything available."

"The material is there, and I think it is up to the student to grasp for it. Everyone was willing to help."

"When I was in high school the curriculum fitted my needs quite well."

"I haven't been to any other high school, but I don't see how it could be made any better. It gave me all I needed from high school."

"I was completely satisfied."

"My high school was well-equipped in most areas."

CHAPTER 5

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

"As a senior, I was allowed to conduct a poetry seminar with fellow students. It was a beneficial experience for all concerned. The obvious division between teacher and students disappeared. As a matter of fact, the teacher took a seat with the other students. I hope to teach some day with this inspiration."

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Approximately one in every five respondents (1,080 of 5,063) made some comment about improvements that could be made in the classroom environment. These expressions were in answer to an open-ended question, "What in your opinion would (or could) make the high school you attended more useful and beneficial to the students who go there?"

The Need for "Better" Teachers

The following quotations from respondents are concerned with teacher selection:

"More qualified teachers should be hired."

"If there were only teachers that taught in their primary field and were more interested in their work -- their field, rather than a teaching job."

"The teachers should be better trained, not only in specialized fields, but in classroom presentation and aesthetic appreciation for students and life."

"If all the teachers would discuss the lessons instead of teaching strictly by the book."

"Have more Mexican-American teachers."

"Have more Chicanos as teachers."

"They need more Black teachers."

"More Black teachers."

"Teachers who cared more about what they were teaching and how they conveyed it to their students."

"More devoted teachers."

"The major change I would suggest is a better teaching staff."

"In my opinion, the school needs teachers who are good in their field and who are able to teach to the students' understanding."

"More dynamic and dramatic teachers."

"Better-qualified science teachers."

"More competent teachers."

"Schools must have better teachers who care (really care) about the students."

"Get teachers that know what they are teaching (some don't, or it seemed that way)."

"Teachers with better teaching methods."

"Studies that can be made interesting and not boring by teachers who know how to keep their pupils from getting too bored, so that they will want to study."

"Teachers better qualified, with more understanding for the students' benefit."

"More teachers who see their jobs as professions, who care about the subjects and the students and themselves, not just about getting through the day without having to think or answer questions or show humanity to those younger and more confused than they."

"Get local teachers, who will know the local problems."

"Teachers who care about their work; there were a lot who didn't"

"The quality of teachers must be improved."

"More experienced, qualified, good instructors in some fields, such as foreign languages."

"Have more specialized teachers in the business field."

"Teachers need to be better trained."

"School needs better teachers. Some of the teachers are definitely too old and not well-qualified."

"Better-educated teachers, who would teach courses faster and require more ground to be covered."

"Higher quality of teaching staff."

"Teachers who can inspire and motivate interest in classes."

"Non-prejudiced teachers."

"Try to get the qualified instructors to teach a wider range of subjects and vocations."

"Get good teachers who really teach, not babysit."

"Provide teachers with a better understanding of today's youth."

"Better teachers than when I was there."

Need for "Younger" Teachers

"Replacing the older 'outdated' teachers with those closer to the generation now going to school. There would be less of a generation gap; therefore, students and teachers would be closer."

"New teachers will be up with the generations to come."

"Younger, more thought-provoking teachers."

"Younger, or better-educated teachers."

"Younger teachers that students can identify with -- teachers that will counsel and take an interest in the students."

"Young teachers have better ideas and keep up with the times."

"Younger teachers who understand students."

"More younger and understanding teachers will make a student enjoy going to school, and not something that is forced upon them."

"Younger, more learned and modern teachers."

"Younger instructors who care about teaching and not just waiting for the day when they retire."

"Younger and more progressive teachers."

"Hire young graduates."

"Bring in younger, more capable teachers and stop hiring friends of the school board and administration."

"Get more younger, more understanding, and more interesting teachers."

"More and better teachers, young ones."

Removal of "Older" Teachers

"Get rid of teachers who have been there for 20 years."

"Promote the old teachers upstairs and let them do something else. These people have impaired the learning of so many students, it is bad."

"Get rid of all the old teachers."

"Get the best teacher, not old bags who are insane, like I had. I had one English teacher my junior year who was, in fact, nuts. He did not know how to teach -- he was a nuisance of a teacher."

"Some of the teachers are antiquated and should be released."

"Get rid of the large collection of worthless, geriatric school teachers and update their staff with better teachers."

"Many of the teachers have been there too long, and they are hindering education instead of helping it."

"I feel at least a couple of the older teachers should retire. They are boring, and one is physically unable to teach."

"For the older teachers to change with the times, or get younger teachers."

"Retire older teachers."

"Make the old teachers step down, so other and better teachers can step in."

"Find a way to get rid of old teachers."

"Watch the age of teachers -- a teacher at 55 might be too old to teach, but too young to retire."

"They had the same teachers for so many years -- they do not change with the time in regard to their study plans."

"Cancel some older teachers' contracts who have not updated teaching techniques."

Removal of Teachers "Who Work Only for the Paycheck"

"For the district to get rid of teachers who have no interest or no desire to teach -- who are simply there for the money."

"Most teachers only worked because of money, and thought of nothing else."

"I'm not against all teachers, but some weren't fit to teach. All teachers should be more active and eager to teach so students can feel the same. It's not just a daily 8-hour job, they're there to teach young minds what they know."

"Teachers that care more for school teaching than 4 o'clock and pay day."

"Some of the teachers do not know how to present themselves to the class. Others are only there for an easy job."

Removal of "Incompetent" Teachers

"Get rid of inept teachers."

"Do away with teachers who are not really concerned with students."

"Many teachers were incompetent in teaching skill and knowledge of their courses."

"Unchanging, inflexible or erotic teachers should be dropped."

"I think the best overall change that could be made in our high school is the hiring of more qualified teachers and the culling out of teachers not wholly dedicated to doing their jobs."

"Do away with teachers who frustrate and hinder students."

"Get rid of the teachers who are not interested in the advancement of education."

"Fire or dismiss teachers who could care less about teaching."

"Retire teachers who can't teach."

"Teachers who hate to see Monday coming and can't wait until Friday naturally have dull classes, with students who don't care whether they participate in them or not."

"Many inept teachers are fine people, but they have no business teaching. They turn off and alienate more students from both their subject and school in general than they help. They must be replaced by competent teachers."

"I believe I could have skipped high school altogether and gone to college and saved three years. I had one teacher in high school. The rest could only summarize or repeat out of a textbook."

Improvement of Teachers' Salaries

"Hire teachers who are best qualified and pay more to bring them in."

"Better qualified teachers through higher salaries."

"An increase in teachers' salaries would probably be enticing to good quality teachers."

"Better teachers! I guess this all comes down to more money and more equipment."

"Offer better pay and smaller class sizes for teachers, to start."

"Pay scale for teachers should be raised, so as to get more interested people."

"Higher salaries for better instructors."

"Higher salary for teachers in order to obtain the best teachers available."

"Better (and better paid) teachers."

"Pay them more money."

Athletic Coaches Who Teach Academic Subjects

"Fewer coaches teaching classes other than P.E. or athletics."

"Take the coaches out of history classrooms, please. I have yet to meet a good one."

"More qualified teachers of social sciences, instead of coaches who are only interested in Friday night's game."

"They need to get teachers that have been educated in certain fields to teach these fields, and not something they don't know about."

"No coaches teaching academics. The poorest teachers in high school were coaches and P.E. teachers who never supervised, just sat in offices or talked."

"Less history courses taught by unqualified coaches."

"In my high school, we had the basketball coach teaching health, American history, and civics, and to be perfectly frank about it, he didn't know much more about the subjects than we did when we entered the course. Due to this teacher's lack of concern for his students and the school's apparent need for a good basketball coach rather than a good history teacher, no one in my class or several of the preceding year's graduating class received the kind of background that is needed to be prepared to take college level courses in history or government."

"Discourage the use of physical education coaches from teaching biology or civics, etc."

"Let coaches teach only P.E., because they are usually not qualified to teach anything else. They don't take enough interest in it. The coaches show too much favoritism, and this reflects back on the students. They have too much control in the system."

"Not requiring coaches to teach would help. Most coaches are poor teachers."

"The courses I disliked most were those taught by coaches who were unable to relate math, science or anything else to a room of students. If high school athletics has to be the gravitation point for all funds and activity, then the coaches should be kept out of the classroom and left in the gym."

Teacher Selection

"Better screening of teachers."

"Psychological tests should be required of all teachers."

"More qualified teachers (M.A. should be required)."

"Fewer people should be allowed to obtain teaching certificates who got into the education field because they couldn't succeed in other fields."

"Have younger teachers and instructors -- screen these people before hiring to determine their suitability so far as personality and character goes, toward the young people of today. Also require that they have a genuine interest in the subject they teach."

"Better screening practices in the hiring of teachers."

"Strengthen the requirements for teaching certificates. There is such a lack of intelligence and creativity in secondary schools that a student usually has no epiphany of awareness until college and perhaps never."

"I think that screening the teachers would be better for students, because in high school I had a few teachers who just didn't teach well or who were personally incompatible."

"Teachers should be selected whose personal life should not link together to interfere with the respect of the students toward them."

"I feel that an upgrading of teacher requirements and/or teachers is needed. What is needed are teachers that can apply the information they teach to present times and life and make subjects more interesting than just read Chapters 1 and 2."

"Teachers should be screened more carefully for their ability to teach."

Teacher Evaluation

"Have continual evaluation of effectiveness of courses and teachers, and flexibility in working with students."

"The teaching qualities of the teachers there should be reviewed, and some changes of their ways of teaching should be required."

"Review their teachers by an objective board."

"Evaluate the teachers better by requiring a proficiency examination and a personal interview with the teachers. This would improve the quality of our public schools and the citizens of this state."

"Have a better system for getting rid of teachers who are not capable of teaching."

"Test the teacher being more understanding with their students."

"Teachers should be checked occasionally to be aware of ability."

"Have teacher evaluation, and fire the unworthy ones."

"Do away with radical teachers and require each district to submit an evaluation report on the function and characteristics of each teacher semi-annually."

"Teachers should have an exam every two years in order to teach, not the perpetual re-enactment of courses."

"Require refresher courses in teaching methods."

"Many teachers needed to return to college for refresher courses."

"Schools should require that teachers take refresher courses to introduce them to new material in their field."

Concern for Students as Individuals

"For the teachers to have more interest in the students themselves and to try to convince them just how important an education is."

"In the field of foreign language, they should have instructors who care about their students and the subject they teach."

"Teachers who take interest in the students and not the newspapers or other teachers."

"The teachers should be more interested in their students."

"Have some teachers who care."

"The only important thing is for the teachers to really care about each student. The teacher should have empathy, not sympathy. The teacher should understand what makes the kids tick."

"Teachers that are personally concerned for each individual student."

"More friendly teachers who care about their students and not just how they rate as a teacher."

"Teachers with a sincere interest in their pupils."

"Teachers that really care."

"Have teachers who are interested in the students."

"Teachers who really care about kids as individuals and want to make school a pleasant, and not a fearful, experience."

"Have the teachers more interested in the children and to take time to explain things to them."

"For _all_ of the teachers to be fully interested in their pupils and not be working just because it's a job that their parents did."

"The teachers need to be more friendly and take a better interest in their pupils."

"For the teachers to better try to get along with the students and understanding their ideas and points of view and give them a little credit for knowing the time of day."

"Teachers and administrators were insensitive to student individuality."

"Schools must have better teachers who care (really care) about the students."

"If teachers would show more personal attention or interest to students."

"Teachers who are sensitive to the students."

"If the teachers would take a greater interest in the students' ideals and questions about their education."

"Teachers could display genuine interest in students."

"Teachers could care more."

"More teachers who are interested in each student as an individual and who are more understanding."

"More attention to individual students."

"Understanding and empathetic teachers. Coaches that treat kids as people and not as hunks of meat."

"The teachers didn't take an interest in the students."

"More interest in students by teachers."

Need for Student/Teacher Communication

"If the teachers and students would stop being so prejudiced and learn we all got to get together and get something out of life."

"Have a closer student-teacher relationship. Teachers should not compare a student with older brothers or sisters."

"For the teacher to try and help more and for the board and teachers to try and get with the kids."

"Develop good personal relationships between pupils and teachers."

"Improving the communication gap between students and teachers."

"Allowing closer relations between students and teachers."

"Having the teachers and counselors understanding and trying to understand the students."

"A better relationship between the faculty and principal toward the students. For counseling purposes, as well as friendship and closeness."

"Better communication between students and faculty."

"There is not enough teacher-pupil communication in the classroom."

"Parent, student and teacher relations."

"Better faculty-school officials and student relationships."

"If teachers and students could really communicate with each other, it would create more interest for the students."

"Better relations between teachers and students."

"Better communication between teachers and students."

"Less formal student-teacher relationships."

"Try to have a closer student-teacher relationship."

"More understanding between teachers and students."

"For teachers and students to come to a better understanding."

"More student-teacher closeness."

"Students should be able to feel free to express their opinions. I found that some teachers had their own and that there were no others."

"Cooperate together and participate with teachers."

"Better communication between student and teacher -- more exchange of ideas, rather than dictation of facts by the teacher."

"Less teacher input, and more student input."

"When I went to school there, the relationship between the students and teachers was bad."

"Teachers who respect students as intelligent human beings, rather than as underlings."

"More personal relationships and understanding between students and teachers and administrators."

"Better understanding between teachers and race minority groups."

Need for Improved Teaching Methods

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"Have better-trained teachers with better methods -- offer major works courses in more subjects."

"Instructors are needed who can motivate students and successfully translate material in terms students can understand."

"A good teacher that knows how to use those methods of making a subject interesting."

"More freedom for teachers to teach relevant issues, even if they are controversial."

"Less memorizing and formal teaching, more discussion."

"Teaching should have been done differently. Students are bored when they have to keep their noses in books."

"Teachers who could hold students' attention without using force or threats."

"The teachers should be better trained, not only in specialized fields, but in classroom presentation and aesthetic appreciation for students and life."

"Have the teacher emphasize the ability to think, in students."

"More enthusiastic and interesting teachers in all courses."

"Get rid of 'busy work.'"

"If all the teachers would discuss the lessons instead of teaching strictly by the book."

"Newer teaching techniques should be introduced, more personal freedom of expression from teachers and students."

"Teachers who cared more about what they were teaching and how they conveyed it to their students."

"Better qualified teachers, who keep up with current methods."

"In my opinion, the school needs teachers who are good in their field, and who are able to teach to the students' understanding."

"For the teachers to take more concern and interest in their students and to have debates and make the subject interesting."

"Most teachers presented the information in an uninspiring, uninteresting manner (needed more field trips, community and related projects, experience-oriented activities)."

"Teachers rely too much on the textbooks, and don't bother (or know how) to bring a course alive by employing active student exchange or discussion, or by inserting his or her own knowledge or information on a subject."

"Teachers that apply the encouragement principle with their students and who encourage creative thinking and creative problem-solving techniques."

"Newer teaching techniques, more discussion, less lecture-type teaching."

"Updated teaching methods and better-trained teachers."

"Modern methods of teaching."

"More informed teachers, more informal classes."

"Teachers with better teaching methods."

"They need to go slower on the subjects, explain to the fullest. Have more classroom discussions, get everyone involved."

"More informal classes with student participation."

"Discontinue the teaching technique of 'funneling' information to students. Rather, challenge students to search for their learning."

"More teachers who are interested in the youth and who teach with enthusiasm and not by the book."

"Make it more interesting for them to like, and the teacher more understanding to students."

"Teachers should improve their teaching methods."

"A more relaxed attitude from teachers."

"Teachers that don't get in a rut day after day."

"Try to teach part of a book well, instead of rushing through the whole book, teaching nothing."

"More emphasis on seminars, rather than formal classes. If you're gonna (sic) change the high school experience, I suggest you had best begin with our awful system for preparing teachers in college."

"Teachers should be a little more impartial in their grading and promotions."

"Teachers who can inspire and motivate interest in classes."

"Interested and knowledgeable teachers are the most important ingredients in a good school. Once good teachers are secured, they should be given a much freer hand in deciding subject matter to be covered, and how much."

"A contemporary and reasonable approach to teaching methods -- not the 'force feed' system of teacher lecture and student response through quizzes, but more interaction among students and faculty through common learning."

"As a senior, I was allowed to conduct a poetry seminar with fellow students. It was a beneficial experience for all concerned. The obvious division between teacher and students disappeared. As a matter of fact, the teacher took a seat with the other students. I hope to teach some day with this inspiration."

Need for "More Interesting" Teachers

"Teachers should add interest to courses in order to hold students' attention -- few are able to do this. I think it's the hardest problem in teaching."

"More enthusiasm from the teachers for the subject they teach."

"More teachers and students alike could get personally involved in the courses."

"It would help if the teachers were more excited about teaching."

"Better, more interesting teachers."

"First of all, studies that can be made interesting and not boring by teachers who know how to keep their pupils from getting too bored so that they will want to study."

"Just a more interesting presentation of the subjects so that the students will be interested and will get full value of the course."

"Find some way to hold interest longer."

"Teachers should try to relate subjects to the students' plans and to life in general."

"Teachers could do a few more things to make students more interested in the courses they take."

"The teachers need to care more and teach not just what is in a book. They need to make classes more interesting."

"Make the subjects more interesting by having better material to work with."

"If the teachers would dedicate themselves toward making their classes more advanced, and, in the same manner, make the material in study more interesting to the students and presentable in a fashion that is easy to understand. I feel that it does take a student to care if he or she would like to learn, but, at the same time, this is no reason for a teacher to slack off."

"Teachers that honestly care and are concerned about teaching. Making a subject interesting enough that students would care to learn about it. If a teacher does not enjoy or care about his subject, how can he expect his students to?"

"Have an instructor who is well trained, so the students will not lose interest in the subject."

"Teachers with up-to-date training and more interesting material."

"Some way to make every class interesting."

"The teachers did not seem qualified to teach and stimulate the students."

"Larger range of subjects with teachers who can make the subjects interesting to students."

"The teachers need to be more interesting and qualified."

Fair and Equal Treatment of Students

"It would be more beneficial to the students if the teachers would take interest in all the children, not just a few."

"Some of the teachers should take an interest in all students, instead of a chosen few."

"For the teachers not to show that he or she favors more of the 'A' students, but also cares about the rest."

"Teachers should not show favoritism to the drill team, football students, etc."

"If there was less discrimination among the teachers, I believe this teaching system would work better."

"By making all students equal, instead of teachers and others patronizing the wealthy ones. Give everyone the same consideration."

"A better teaching faculty, with all students considered equal."

More Discipline in the Classroom

"More discipline in classes, and a staff interested in the students instead of personal gains."

"The teachers (some) should be harder on the students. Some are too easy. I believe if the teachers were a little bit harder on the students it would help the students in the long run.".

"The teachers being stricter."

"More control over students in the classroom."

"Schools need stricter teachers -- some teachers are afraid of students."

"If more of the teachers were sincere about the courses they taught and really were strict, the student would learn more -- also, they should buckle down about cheating, this was awfully bad in our school, and kids playing hooky."

"Teachers that control classrooms and know what they are teaching would be very beneficial."

"The school could be better if it had teachers that would discipline the students."

"The teachers were much too lenient as far as discipline."

"Sometimes the teachers were not strict enough or did not have a way of communicating with students."

"Most of the teachers seemed to be just for the day's pay, and couldn't control classes."

Less Discipline in the Classroom

"Have the teachers keep their minds on teaching, instead of worrying about little things, like how long your dress is."

"A little more teaching from the teachers and a little less worrying about how long a skirt or a head of hair is (except in extreme cases)."

"If the teachers had different attitudes on this matter (strict discipline) it would help the situation."

"For the teachers to worry less about how the students are dressed and to concentrate more on helping each student with his lessons."

"Teachers need to have more interest in their work and less in discipline."

"Teachers need to be more interested in each student, and not rules."

Facilities and Teaching Materials

Sixty-nine respondents, preponderantly from the smaller school districts, cited a need for improvement in textbooks, teaching materials, equipment, and facilities.

The following are quotations from the respondents' comments concerning textbooks, teaching materials, equipment, and facilities:

Textbooks

"If the books were in better condition. Most of the books we used were used, and had many pages missing."

"Unless already changed, new books and equipment."

"Have the school equipped with new books."

"More books and equipment for student use."

"Get away from the fairy-tale type history books and the approach of focusing historical topics around wars."

"Obtain better textbooks."

"Better books."

"Instead of using certain textbooks in each course, current works which relate to the particular field of study should be used."

"More up-to-date books."

"New books."

Teaching Materials

"More teaching aids, to motivate students more."

"Teachers are too particular about school supplies needed for individual classes that runs into money."

"Some teachers need to update their teaching materials and methods."

"More study aids, equipment, and visual aids and modern teaching practices."

Equipment

"More equipped science laboratories."

"Better equipment, facilities and supplies."

"More modern, up-to-date equipment and studies in the business world."

"It should be equipped and staffed with the best equipment and teachers."

"Mainly electric typewriters, because all jobs now days (sic) require electric typewriters."

"Good equipment in chemistry lab, less emphasis on book learning."

"Seek funds or funnel funds into areas where equipment is needed for proper training in some courses."

"More up-to-date teaching methods and equipment."

"More modern equipment."

"When I was going, they needed more equipment."

"Better equipment."

"Teachers should have more up-to-date equipment for student use."

"Maintain a good, qualified staff and up-to-date equipment.

Facilities

"Put central air in the whole school."

"Better lab facilities for science and math courses."

"Air conditioning."

"All schools should provide the same educational quality to students (including facilities)."

"Expanded facilities."

"Build a new school building."

"Redoing facilities to make the school more inviting and enjoyable."

"More modern facilities."

"More facilities such as buildings, labs, lab equipment, material and more sports facilities."

"Upgrade the building so there is a better atmosphere for learning."

"Renovation of the building so that three or four class interaction sessions could be held. Team teaching, use of up-to-date audio-visual communications, and, in some areas, introduction of pass-fail grading."

"Facilities need to be updated."

"Better library facilities so the students would know how to use a large library."

"A more adequate library."

"Needs more woodships."

"Facilities such as labs, shops, libraries, air and heating units, and new buildings with more space."

"Have better facilities for them, such as a good library."

"New and more facilities, and need to rebuild because within a few years it is going to fall apart."

"I think better facilities would make a big difference in the attitudes the students create about the school they attend."

"More room."

"The school was small, overcrowded and poorly staffed. Facilities expansion was the only answer."

"A better library."

"More modern classroom facilities."

"The building needed some repair work done on it or possibly a new building so it would be less crowded."

"We needed a larger library when I attended high school. I think this would be very beneficial to the students."

"They need more labs with teachers showing you how to use them instead of trying to learn yourself."

Grading and Testing System

Typical comments about the grading system included:

"By the use of class standards, some students are being held back. Our present grading system is unfair, unnecessary, and grossly inadequate. The system categorizes students on a very impersonal basis. I feel individualized instruction will soon become necessary and would be, in effect, more successful."

"Inability to find meaning in a competitive grading system is a cause of high school dropouts."

"In order to conform more with college style and to allow the student to use more of his acquired skills, I think the high school testing system should change from being one of an objective nature to one that is more subjective (essay)."

"Require that all students take finals. This would help the student to know how to study for finals and large tests when he goes to college -- aid in studying a large amount of material."

"Until something is done about the way grades are used as a measure of knowledge, I feel that most people will be indifferent about schools. There is too much stress on whether you make an A or B in high school and college. Ninety percent of the students worry more about grades than whether they are learning anything or not. All courses should be on a pass-fail basis. Then you won't have to worry about A's or B's, but that you can actually learn the material."

"Students should not feel that they have to meet standards set up by others -- in other words, the grading system of 0-100."

"Place a greater emphasis on learning, not on making a good grade. Grades are for parents; learning is for students."

CHAPTER 6

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING

"I feel schools are pushing these kids too hard. They need to be on levels according to their ability."

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING

The need for increased individual attention -- on both educational and personal levels -- was a theme throughout the responses of the former high school students who participated in the Texas Education Product Study.

More than 100 of the respondents, in reply to an open-ended question dealing generally with suggestions for changing the schools, entered a plea for personalized attention in the classroom. Although the larger portion of these respondents asked for additional help for "slow learners," there were also requests for additional attention to the needs of "rapid learners." Others sought individual attention for all students.

The following are quotations from the respondents' comments concerning the need for additional attention to students' problems in the classroom:

Need for More Attention to "Slow Learners"

"Provisions for slower students. As I am a special education teacher, this is of particular interest to me."

"For the teachers to give more attention to the ones who need help the most."

"Teachers should be willing to help students after hours."

"Better teachers with an interest upon helping their students."

"Education courses should be integrated with vocational courses for slower learners, to avoid boredom and create interest."

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"Better teachers with an interest upon helping their students."

"Education courses should be integrated with vocational courses for slower learners, to avoid boredom and create interest."

"Teachers should pinpoint the problems of hard-to-learn children and help them, not ignore them and barely pass them. Give them more help."

"If teachers could devote more time to the slow learning students."

"The atmosphere in the classroom definitely has a bearing on whether some students learn or not. Some students are capable of learning in any atmosphere, but that is not fair to those students who find it difficult to blend in."

"A student that has a low I.Q. would like to learn different."

"Teachers did not demand your attention. They became uninterested when a student fell behind or needed help."

"Classes should be so arranged that students needing special attention receive it, and the gifted students are not held back."

"We need better classes and teachers for students who are slow in certain subjects."

"The slow learner (and I was one) is often left behind and not given enough coaching by teachers. I am speaking specifically of a school which produces, consistently and solely, above-average students. The less capable in this environment is ignored."

"The teachers do not take the time with students that are slow to learn, especially from low-income families."

"I feel schools are pushing these kids too hard. They need to be on levels according to their ability."

"Children need individual attention. Teachers have to give special attention to the unable student to learn and to participate and to involve himself in every classroom."

Need for Individual Attention

"The most important thing is to have fewer students in each classroom, so that the teacher can relate to the students as individuals."

"More individual training from teachers. Less students per teacher."

"If the teacher could find more time for each individual to help them learn their subjects better."

"Smaller,classes, where teacher-student relationships could be more personal."

"Teachers could not work with each student as they really should."

"If the equipment was provided for handicapped people; and most of the teachers were a little less prejudiced against handicapped students."

"They need more teachers to help explain things more careful (sic) and to help each student more on the subjects they take."

"Maybe some of the classes should have more individualized instruction."

"When I was there the teachers didn't really take enough time with the students. If they had taken more time, I might have done better."

"Need to cut down on the size of classes, so more attention can be given to each individual. The teacher must create an interest in each individual to want to work outside of class."

"Smaller classes -- more individual participation."

"More qualified teachers, to allow a smaller number of students per classroom, which would allow more attention to each student."

"More individualized programs."

"I think more individualized education would have been beneficial."

"Classes are so big that instructors do not have enough time to spend on individuals."

"Something to stimulate interest in classes. Individual learning so 'slow' students can comprehend and 'bright' students can learn more."

"If teachers could take the time with each student and help them with their questions and help them to understand."

"To get teachers who are willing to help a student individually if they do not understand the subject. Also to help the students become more interested in all school subjects."

"More opportunity to advance at a pace suited to the individual."

"Individualized programs."

"I feel that more space is needed as the number of students grows each year. Also, if possible, a closer ratio of teachers and students so that more could be gained by students."

"I think if they would have smaller classrooms and more individual help for the students, especially the ones that are a little slower than others."

Need for More Attention to "Rapid Learners"

"There should be more advanced courses for the more rapid learners."

"Teach more advanced levels to those that want it; for me, this concerns math and science."

"More innovation and creativity among teachers, so as to not squelch what qualities the students do possess. Orientation for teachers into the problems of children of exceptional intellect, either at the dull normal level or the superior intelligence level. (A true concern and feeling for the meaning of the word 'teacher'.)"

"Have advanced classes for faster students."

"More advanced science courses with qualified teachers."

"Personally, I feel I could have gone faster and learned more in some areas."

"Offer more advanced courses for those capable to handle them."

"Make the courses more challenging -- some of them were too 'Mickey Mouse.' They should make the student think more and memorize less."

"We need an accelerated format for advanced and bright students."

"I think a revision of advanced courses is needed so that students who want to learn are encouraged to do so."

"More advanced courses, possibly some for college credit."

The following is a summary of the 107 responses pointing to a need for special attention:

	Size of School District							
Need for Special Attention	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
More Attention Should be Given to Needs of Students who are "Slow Learners"	5	7	6	3	17	6	2	46
Student/Teacher Ratio Should be Reduced in Order to Allow for More Individual Attention to Students and their Problems	10	11	3	7	5	0	0	36
More Advanced Courses Should be Provided for "Bright" Students	4	3	5	1	10	1	1	25

CHAPTER 7

CURRICULUM

> "There is more to managing a home than cooking and sewing and cleaning -- also more for a father to do than bring in money. A course is needed to teach the family how to buy wisely, the laws on financing, budget living, how to invest, how to shop, how to manage a check book properly, and a little psychology about how to get along together. This course should be a prerequisite for graduation."

CURRICULUM

Although the statistical summaries presented earlier in this report reflect the majority attitude of the ex-students, written comments about the curriculum came from a vocal minority whose ideas are best presented in their own words. The following comments were made in favor of additional graduation requirements:

"I see why bookkeeping is essential. I think everybody should be required to have it."

"Typing should be a mandatory course."

"Offer more sociology and psychology-oriented courses, and make two foreign languages required."

"The requirement of more math, science, foreign languages and music is needed."

"Require them to take more math and science courses."

"Typing, bookkeeping and speech should be mandatory."

"Every person in the Southwest part of the United States should take at least one course in Spanish."

"Requiring courses in fine arts would be beneficial. Some students won't take courses unless they are required."

"Require more courses relating to business."

"Bookkeeping is a very general course. No individual can get away from keeping some form of book. It should be a requirement in my opinion."

"It would have been more beneficial to me if speech had been required of all college-bound students."

"Better courses on true home management. Open for boys as well as girls. The financial situation of the American home could be improved by proper teaching of such a course. There is more to managing a home than cooking and sewing and cleaning -- also more for a father to do than bring in money. A course to teach the family how to buy wisely, the laws on financing, budget living, how to invest, how to shop, how to manage a check book properly and a little psychology about how to get along together. This course should be a prerequisite for graduation."

"High schools should require students to take higher mathematics and sciences, whether or not they plan on going to college."

"I feel art and speech should be required courses, just as English, math, etc."

"Make requirements stiffer."

"Offer more basic courses, requiring more science courses for graduation."

"I think every high school should have a one-semester course where a student is taught to balance a checkbook and consumer problems such as leases, other contracts, wills, making loans, buying a car, insurance, etc. I think it should be required. As a college student I couldn't balance a checkbook."

Comments Favoring Alteration, Lessening or Abolition of Requirements

"Less required courses and more enthusiastic and interesting teachers in all courses."

"Less required standards, more of a variety of a curriculum and courses."

"Wider range of electives and less student requirements, so that interests of students could be followed in specific areas."

"More flexibility in course requirements, more emphasis on relevance in course material, more responsibility for those students capable of assuming it."

"Change some of the requirements such as health which does not count for college credit and supply other courses in which students are more interested."

"Have fewer required courses like sophomore English and offer a variety of English courses instead."

"Allow each student to work for his or her own goals. This would mean in some cases not forcing a student to take courses not needed. Make more courses available."

"Have more teachers, better teachers, expanded curriculum, less emphasis on extracurricular activities, fewer restrictions (required courses, etc.)."

"High school gives nc sight to your future. It's all required courses for graduation, not living. High school is a necessity to live, but it should show more to life. After graduation you have no idea of what's ahead."

"Less emphasis on required subjects (P.E., etc.) and changing the lecture technique of teach, memorization, and student regurgitation."

"Have a greater variety of courses and fewer 'core' requirements to allow time to take extra courses of personal interest."

"Give the students more of a variety in their choice of subjects. There were too many limitations due to graduation requirements."

"Texas history should be dropped as a required subject. It is required in junior high school. In its place there should be a course to help one express himself."

"At least offer, and not require, old backward courses."

"Evaluate courses and eliminate those not necessary for today's society. Allow students who know what field they wish to enter to take courses helpful in that field instead of required courses that are not."

"I believe all the required courses are very important, yet more vocational courses would be much more useful."

"Offer a wider variety of courses with a less structured set of requirements."

"Have uniform credits throughout the nation, and more selective courses."

"Let the student pick his own courses. There should be no required subjects."

"Let the students choose the courses they want, don't tell them what they have to take."

"I believe more emphasis should be placed on what the individual wants to get from attending school and less on what they think you should be forced to take."

"Do something with the legislative history and civics requirements."

"Have a wider selection of courses and not be required to take as many."

"Students need more freedom to choose courses they want to take, not just what was set up before they got there."

"They should have given us a better selection of courses. Can't take courses you'd like to take because of mandatory courses and not enough teachers."

"Change some of the requirements for graduation."

"Limit the courses a student must study, i.e., required courses (English, history, government) if such is not his chosen field of study. Set up a system similar to German schools would provide above situations whereby a student would be able to study his chosen field with limited or no interference from studies irrelevant to his chosen field."

"Get rid of math that will never be used and put more secretarial training and office experience in."

"The required courses are so geared to those going to college. This time could have been spent in vocational courses."

"I feel that there should be no 'required' subjects."

"Students want to learn, but reject if it's forced."

Comments Concerning Graduation Requirements as a Factor in Causing Dropouts

"A student may not do well in high school because his interest and talent does not lie in the required subjects."

"There is no relation between their wants and what is mandatory."

"The students may feel that the required subjects have no relevance to the type of career they would like to pursue."

"The school should try to help these students instead of telling them that they have to take required courses to finish."

"Too many subjects are pushed that doesn't (sic) need to be for someone going into a trade."

"Due to the rigid format of high school education and student who gets behind must play 'catch up' this is frustrating and discouraging."

"Failure of the student to see relevance between himself and the courses he is taking. The student often doesn't have enough choice about what he can take. Too many required courses are often shoved in his face and he feels suppressed and confused."

"There are too many required subjects. I feel students should have the right to make their own schedules -- with no subjects required. This way students would select subjects that interest them and as long as they're interested they will stay in school."

"Courses which could be exciting are made dull by curriculum requirements or uninterested teacher."

"Federal government was a required course and was only offered the first semester of my senior year. I failed the course because I disliked my teacher and had no interest in the subject. I couldn't re-take the subject the second semester in order to graduate because there was no teacher available on that subject."

"Cause (sic) the school board sayed (sic) I didn't lack enough credits to go back to school the next school year."

"Required subjects didn't interest students. The school was too interested in courses pertaining to college preparation."

"I don't like some of the courses we had to take. Because I don't think it would help us all that much in the future."

"Students possibly cannot relate high school requirements to life experiences."

"Mainly school is supposed to prepare a student for the future but when he's not studying what he'll be doing what's the use of going to school. More students today feel that a high school education isn't worth a dime because they know what they're doing won't have anything to do with their work. Now I know that English, math, etc. are required and are useful but when they have typing, bookkeeping as a required subject in place of something like driver education, cosmetology, then they will accomplish something."

Comments on Curricular Changes

"Instead of always planning the courses for those going to college, they should be geared to help people get ready to live on their own. High school or college didn't help me at all, so now I'm having to learn on my own."

"Offer more courses which will 'ready' a person for a job. If the state would do that and forget the courses such as history and literature (those subjects which do not help one in getting and keeping a job today), the state may also eliminate a lot of welfare." A sufficiently trained person (which one could get from high school if the courses for outside living were offered) could find a job and keep it."

"Eliminate courses that are of no value to students. Reduce the number of required courses, offer a wider variety of courses, and let the student decide what courses he wants to take."

"More enrichment courses would possibly have shown more relevance than the isolated ones."

"Have more courses preparatory for either college-bound or vocational-bound students, and not a lacking, middle-of-the-road approach."

"More subjects should be offered, so that the students could develop their individual talents."

"Schools need an increase in vocational education and a better arrangement of classes in order to permit a student to take any course without conflict with other courses."

"Better preparation for college would be helpful, especially in theme writing, interpretation of literature, and a more varied selection of subjects. When we were in high school, we were offered only the necessary subjects for graduation. This limited most in selecting a career field on graduating, if it required higher education."

Comments on the Individual Subject Fields

Fine Arts

"Many students are interested in art. I was, but it was not offered, and I feel it should have been. It would have helped me a great deal."

"I have become increasingly aware of the unnecessary shortcomings of music and art courses. They are so important for a fully-developed human being, and are so underemphasized -- especially music theory."

"I think I would have enjoyed (then, and in the future) skills and appreciation that can be gotten from fine arts or more vocational type subjects (such as sewing, cooking, chorus, etc.)."

"I would like to see more fine arts activities available to the students."

"At the time, I would have appreciated art, photography, etc. Now I wish even more they had been available."

"Have more specialized courses, such as advanced foods, clothing, great novels courses, ceramics, to study design centered on nature in art class."

"Add fine arts (speech, art, drama) -- especially speech, since communication is becoming mostly oral and not written."

"Schools need more classes to widen the interests of the students, such as art and drama."

"I feel art and speech should be required courses just as English and math. Students need to gain the confidence that they can speak well. Also, students should be told that everyone is artistically inclined. The talent just needs to be developed."

"We need more courses in drama, music, and clerical training."

"Have more fine arts courses."

"Be sure to keep art courses, but teach art right."

"Speech is needed -- no matter what line of work you're in, you need to be able to express yourself best."

"Offer more courses in speech."

Foreign Languages

"Offer more language courses besides Spanish and Latin."

"More foreign languages aside from Spanish are needed -- it was the only one offered."

"I feel there should be more stress on the importance of foreign language -- especially Spanish."

"I think more foreign language should be stressed."

"Make a requirement of foreign language and offer four years of training in several languages taught by exceptional teachers."

"Possibly, more foreign language should be offered."

"I believe that a foreign language should be mandatory, as it is in European countries (Germany, Russia, etc.)."

"My school didn't have any foreign languages I wanted to take."

"Foreign languages are required for a liberal arts degree -- high schools in Texas should begin these languages much earlier, not only in Spanish, but also Latin, French, German, Russian, etc."

"Make two foreign languages required."

"Schools should have a wider foreign language program."

"Offer more foreign languages. Stress the importance of foreign languages."

"Schools need foreign language courses.

Bookkeeping

"Require students to take a basic vocational course such as bookkeeping or marketing."

"Offer more business courses, especially a full-time bookkeeping course (now it is offered only every other year) and possibly a Bookkeeping II course."

English, Literature

"Schools need more varied offerings in literature rather than just survey courses (for example, modern poetry, essay writing)."

"I think English is very important in life, but should be taught more than what I had."

"English was fine, but I've never used it."

"I think we should study more than just English literature. I'd like to see literature from other countries offered."

"More courses should be available in English literature."

"English teachers need to stress communication and teach students how to express themselves while requiring theme and/or teaching grammatical structure."

"Perhaps more English grammar and literature are needed in preparation for college."

"More English literature courses are needed."

"Higher level English courses dealing with writing are needed."

Health and Physical Education

"Offer more athletics for girls, such as tennis, swimming, etc."

"More organized and supervised sports should be taught in physical education."

"There should be more variety in P.E. class activities."

"Emphasize physical well-being, rather than solely football. Offer other sports on an equal footing; e.g., fencing, karate, etc."

"P.E. is important and should not be done away with."

"More interest should be placed on the varieties of sports in the P.E. department."

"P.E. programs need to be available for those who would like to improve physical skills, strength, etc. Programs in effect while I was in high school offered only purely recreational type workouts."

"Physical education was good for exercise, but of little use (self-defense would have been better than badminton)."

Mathematics

"Get rid of math that will never be used."

"Math didn't prepare enough for college calculus."

"Offer a larger selection of courses and provide courses which could apply towards college requirements (English, analytical geometry, calculus)."

"Add a calculus course."

"Require more math."

"More higher math courses should be offered, and some engineering preparatory courses should be offered."

"More courses in mathematics are needed."

"Schools should require higher mathematics."

"Math was not deep enough, not enough variety."

"Increase math and engineering-oriented courses."

"More advanced math courses are needed for those who are going to college. Differential and integral calculus, at the very least, are necessary."

"I see no point in taking algebra and higher math, unless you are going to be an engineer."

Natural Sciences

"Offer more technical courses in science."

"Offer advanced courses in science."

"More varied courses are needed (straight physics, chemistry, biology -- nothing diverse like marine biology, ecology, is offered)."

"Maintain a wide choice of college-preparatory courses for the college-bound student (advanced courses in math, biology, chemistry, etc.)."

"Increase the physical sciences of chemistry and biology."

"Institution of laboratory courses in biology, chemistry and physics, in addition to the lectures, would be helpful."

"Have more advanced courses to challenge the more intelligent students and better prepare them for college studies such as biology."

Social Sciences

"School should be relevant to the outside world. Courses in sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, are needed."

"Schools should offer studies in humanity."

"Schools should offer a broader range of topics in such fields as history, English, psychology and political science."

"There needs to be more social science."

"Electives are needed to enable at least senior students to have an opportunity to specialize if desired -- such as optional upper-level courses in history, government, math, science, etc."

"I consider it a must to have studies on human relations."

"More psychological and sociological studies are needed to help students understand themselves and to better integrate into society."

"A wider variety of college-type electives should be offered, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, etc."

"Enlargement of the social sciences, communications and other technical programs is needed."

"More course work is needed in social sciences."

"Offer more sociology and psychology-oriented courses."

"Have more classes available, on an elective basis, for students going to college for business management, sociology, psychology, etc."

"Schools should be offering sociology and psychology courses in almost every career goal a student might want to seek."

"New and interesting courses should be interjected into the high school curriculum that those not attending college would otherwise miss. Several such courses might deal with psychology, anthropology, architecture, astronomy and many others."

"Have more courses in sociology, psychology -- courses that help a person realize his values, morals and goals."

"Offer more humanities."

"More sociology and psychology are needed."

"Schools should offer sociology and psychology courses which will teach students about people around them and teach them to have respect for all kinds of people."

"Sociology fields would help anyone."

Typing and Shorthand

"Shorthand, any business courses, should be offered."

"In our time, shorthand doesn't seem as valuable as typing, because so many offices have a dictaphone."

"Schools need more hours on typing and shorthand and business courses."

"I would like to have taken more typing."

"Shorthand is not as important as I thought, as dictaphones have taken the place of shorthand in most offices."

Vocational Agriculture

"Do away with useless courses such as F.F.A. If a survey is made, I'm sure no farmers come out of my high school. If it is kept, train them for a veterinary career."

"A more advanced agricultural training and industrial training program is needed."

"There should be more agricultural courses offered for both girls and boys."

"Though I enjoyed vocational agriculture, I really have not been able to utilize what I learned, nor have others (for the most part) who attended school with me."

"More vocational courses are needed, because it is an agricultural part of the country."

"Agribusiness and vocational agriculture are needed."

Vocational Distributive Education

"I believe that more students should be able to take courses (distributive education) with on-the-job training."

"Vocational distributive education gives the student a chance to start into the business world ahead of graduation."

"A business or corporate D.E. program is needed."

"Offer more data processing courses and distributive education."

"Distributive education should be offered in all high schools to enable graduates the opportunity to get jobs who are unable to go to college or do not wish to go to college."

Vocational Health Occupations

"Offer more courses in the paramedical field."

"I wish I had taken health occupations in high school, so I would have something to fall back on in case something happens to my husband."

"Other than the basic science, etc., courses required in all high schools, there were no courses in paramedics or related specifically to the health field."

"Schools should offer anatomy and physiology as electives."

"Health occupations should be offered."

"Offer vocational training in becoming a nurse's aide."

Vocational Homemaking

"Possibly a more specialized school of homemaking (i.e., home management, housekeeper motel, wedding consultant, etc.) is needed."

"Our homemaking teacher didn't teach the basics in sewing and cooking which are very important when starting a home."

"When I went to school, vocational education was not stressed enough. There was no vocational course for child care, or preparing for becoming a wife or mother. They should have had a marriage and family course. They've got to know what type of responsibilities their sex drive will put them into."

"Have better homemaking courses."

Vocational Industrial Education

"Offer courses that have not been introduced, like law enforcement, welding, and plumbing."

"I feel 'shop' courses should be offered -- possibly stressed -- above the vocational agriculture courses offered, since few, if any, of my classmates actually went into either agriculture or agricultural business."

"The vocational industrial education course, although two years of it were offered, was not enough to fully get a knowledge of the basics of it."

"Offer more education in heavy equipment operation."

"Offer more vocational courses; i.e., electronics, plumbing, electricity, computer, carpentry, etc."

"More vocational courses are needed to train students for skilled jobs that do not require so much college."

"Teach more technical shop courses for persons of low income."

"Trade courses are needed; barber, TV and radio, etc."

Vocational Office/Business

"I would think there should be more business machines."

"Offer a course in IBM keypunch or computers."

"More data processing courses are needed."

"Put more secretarial training and office experience in."

"Offer more business courses for seniors."

"Offer more varied courses in business."

"Give training in a few of the business fields or maybe business machines besides typing."

"There is not enough vocational office or business training, and no job opportunity, unless further business training courses have been taken."

"Arrange closer contacts with the outside business and professional world in an advisory capacity."

"Pay more attention to business courses for girls, such as key punch, etc."

"Let the students enroll in the classes, such as vocational office education, sooner than their senior year in school."

"Offer more advantages in secretarial studies."

"High school would be useful if V.O.E. and D.E. teachers teach more students in office subjects. It would sure be useful for the students to get some experience for office jobs."

"Have more business courses for people who do not want to attend college, such as PBX training."

"Today we live in a machine-working world. I would recommend more IBM machines."

"Schools need more modern and up-to-date equipment and studies in the business world."

General Business and Economics

"More courses should be offered in fields other than the same old ones -- such as computer science, aviation management, etc."

"From my standpoint as a business major, I feel that basic introductory business and economics courses should be offered."

"More business courses (such as economics) should have been offered to students who were going to college for a business degree."

"Offer more accounting."

"Set up special courses in business for students who will not get into college."

"Offer more college-type courses in business and business skills to help the untrained have as much experience as possible."

"Have a business management course in high school."

Industrial Arts

"A better variety of industrial arts classes should be offered."

Education

"Students wishing to go into the teaching field do not really have much of an idea of what education courses involve. They should be given courses in high school to give them an insight as to what to expect in college and in teaching experiences, so they can decide whether or not they wish to remain in this field before they get more than halfway through college and realize they are in the wrong field."

"For any student who wants to teach school as an occupation, there should be a program set up to allow the student to participate in the elementary grades as an aide or occasionally teaching in the grade level of their choice."

"I believe high schools should have a few education courses for those planning to teach."

Sex Education

"I believe strongly that courses dealing openly and informatively with sexual education should be placed in the otherwise censored system which existed when I was in high school."

"Offer more sex education."

"Schools need a sex education class."

"Teach more practical courses, such as sex education."

Ethnic Studies

"They should have a Mexican-American studies program."

"They should have a bilingual program."

"Offer ethnic studies, required social work (see what lives some have)."

"Have studies about real black culture."

Other Suggested Courses

"Have more courses that could be applied for credit that do pertain to bettering one's life, such as ecology, simplified home repairs, practical application of home chemistry, prevention of illness, health maintenance."

"I think there should be more practical courses offered. I think I would have benefited from a course in practical science or math."

"Religious training should be offered (Bible literature)."

"Offer more humanities, art history, anthropology, philosophy, comparative religion, more freedom in independent studies, contemporary arts, and media (cinema, filmmaking), psychology, health and nutrition, sex education, drug education, anything that appeals to contemporary students' curiosity and spontaneous needs."

"Offer police school courses."

"Offer a course on 'How to Study' in the freshman year of high school."

Former Students' Comments

Foreign Languages

"I had no choice in language I wanted to take. French and Latin were given only when a certain number of students asked for such -- so I had to take Spanish. I would have preferred French."

"I wish I had taken at least Spanish, since we live in Texas."

"I had no selection of a foreign language -- German was the only language offered."

"Foreign language courses are unnecessary because English is spoken by more people all over the world than any other language."

Bookkeeping

"I wanted to take bookkeeping. It seems to me there could have been a schedule that would have permitted this."

"Bookkeeping would have helped me find a better job."

"In today's business world, simple bookkeeping enters in nearly every day and, thus, is very important."

"Now that I'm in business for myself, record keeping really helps me."

"I can see the importance of bookkeeping now."

"I realize now that I really could have used it in a secretarial job I had."

"I never took it, but perhaps if I had, it would be easier to find a job."

"Bookkeeping is very important. I wish I had taken it, now."

English, Literature

"I find that, in the business world today, the proper English is very important."

"English has proved invaluable in the field I am presently in."

"I realize the importance of English now."

"English and math are useful instruments in everyday life."

"English is more important to me than I thought it was."

"I didn't understand that English and literature are the things you need to form a personality, communicate and have a basic understanding of people."

"I wish I had better and more English training."

"I think English is very important in life, but should be taught more than what I had."

"I realize the importance of English, math and chemistry now, because I use each every day at work. I regret especially that I didn't learn chemistry very well. This and the fact that I did not continue my education is holding me back in my career."

Typing and Shorthand

"It's hard to get a job as an office clerk without typing. Anyone halfway interested in business should take this -- boys and girls alike."

"I didn't realize what value typing, shorthand and bookkeeping would have in the business world until I went to work. I am assistant manager of a store and run a full office using all three of the above skills."

"Typing training assisted me in training in keypunch operations. Without having taken typing, I would not have worked as well for a company."

"I wish the importance (of typing and shorthand) had been expressed more in jobs for women."

"Shorthand has helped me greatly in getting a job before I had the opportunity to get the schooling in college."

"I wish now I had done a better job in typing. I didn't type well enough to get the job I wanted."

"One needs to know how to type if he is going to college, and many of the jobs offered to women require typing."

"It would have helped in my college courses by being able to take notes in shorthand and typing my own term papers. It would also have been helpful in getting a better job when I left college after only acquiring 48 college hours."

"I wish the importance had been stressed more in jobs for women."

"Offer more hours on typing and shorthand and business courses."

"Typing helped me get a job."

"It so happens that I took typing in school for an easy credit. But, most likely, it serves me good, which helps me in a lot of ways, which is my job here in the service."

Social Sciences

"Sociology wasn't even offered."

"The school should have offered economics."

"Sociology was not offered -- it should be, as well as general psychology. It might have made a difference in my college major. Also, kids who aren't going to college should have an opportunity to be exposed to these subjects."

"Sociology classes were not offered. I feel this would be a valuable class."

"History and other social sciences are far more valuable to individuals than many high school students realize."

Fine Arts

(Music) "I teach piano to several children, thanks to seven years in band and nine years of private lessons."

"I feel art and speech should be required courses, just as English, math, etc. Students need to gain the confidence that they can speak well."

(Speech) "No matter what line of work you're in, you need to be able to express yourself best."

"At the time, I would have appreciated art, photography, etc. Now, I wish even more they had been available."

"Hardly any fine arts courses were available."

"I think I would have enjoyed (then, and in the future) skills and appreciations that can be gotten from fine arts."

Mathematics

"The ability to figure mathematics problems quickly is very important."

"Math helps more than anything."

"I didn't take geometry. I wish I had. It would have helped me some on the job I have. It possibly would have helped me to get the engineering job I applied for and still hope to get."

"At first, I did not think that I would need these types of courses to help me get a good job, but now I'm glad that I went ahead and took them."

Natural Sciences

"I thought chemistry was useless and too hard, but it gave me a good head start when I got into college chemistry. It was one of the few courses that helped me in nursing."

"Perhaps a few more advanced courses, especially chemistry and biology, in my case, were needed."

Vocational Agriculture

"Vocational agriculture was just a relaxing course in high school, but I make my living out of what I learned in ag class."

Vocational Distributive Education

"Vocational distributive education was helpful in getting a job."

"Vocational distributive education gives the student a chance to start into the business world ahead of graduation."

Vocational Industrial Education

"Courses in electric shop set me up for a job."

Vocational Office/Business

"Vocational office education has helped me in my job."

Vocational Health Occupations

"Other than the basic science, etc., courses required in all high schools, there were no courses in paramedics or related specifically to the health field."

Health and Physical Education

"The good physical condition I acquired in high school helped in various physically-demanding summer work I had between college semesters and in my military training."

CHAPTER 8

LIFE-COPING SKILLS

"There should be more opportunities for students who need and want to learn more on problem-solving; where they can go and what to look for when they are confronted with a problem."

LIFE-COPING SKILLS

Respondents were not questioned specifically on their perceptions of the goals of a high school education; however, a pattern emerged from their responses suggesting a desire for greater emphases on life-coping skills and humanistic values. Studies related to "life-coping skills" could include philosophy, human relations, communications, sex education, consumer education, marriage and family living, and problem-solving.

Eight former students specified the need for courses in marriage and family life, although such courses are being offered already through the Homemaking departments of most Texas schools.

Some respondents saw their own backgrounds as being overly sheltered from the "real world" and regretted lack of exposure to issues and ideas rare in their home communities. They felt a need for courses in sociology and psychology that would enlighten them concerning people around them and -- through that enlightenment -- instill respect for all people. They said that perhaps schools need "a better or broader social fraternization with people of all races and backgrounds."

Although only a few former students mentioned racial integration in connection with their schools, several offered the positive comment that integration is desirable and also very important in preparing students for a well-rounded view of life.

Others commented that, with voting now beginning at age 18, more courses are needed to prepare students for roles as voting citizens. The quotations which comprise the remainder of this chapter offer clues to various life-coping concerns.

Citizenship and Government

"Schools need to offer more government to prepare a person with a more useful meaning of government."

"Today's young people want to learn more about their world and need to train for tomorrow's betterment of this world and country."

"You can't make a kid a 'good citizen' by cramming it down his throat."

"The high school should allow for more diversity of opinion and interests, and encourage sensible and humane views in its students, with the aim of developing well-adjusted, responsible and politically conscious citizens."

"My senior government was especially good for me, in that it helped me realize how important voting and keeping up with current events is."

"Students should know more about civics and economics in everyday life and especially in voting."

"One important area of study I found to be in serious need of improvement was the social studies, specifically civics, and in this case, the study of state and local government. I feel that, in order to be a good citizen, the individual must have a good grasp of the workings of government, especially of state and local government, for it is at this level that the individual is most affected. In order to have a civilized society, some form of government is needed, and, in order to have good government responsive to the needs of the people it presumes to represent, the people must have a working knowledge of how government operates so that they can make intelligent decisions when they vote. Therefore, civics is an important course to the individual whether he plans to dig a ditch or become a brain surgeon. I feel that the civics courses in high school should be revamped with more emphasis on the state and, especially, on the local governments because it is at these levels that the individual can get involved and truly become a good citizen."

"While in high school, I thought civics was unnecessary. Now I realize knowing about the government and the way it is run is very important."

"An interesting teacher in Political Science presented the American political system in a manner as to make us really understand the forces and influences behind voting behavior, etc."

Current Issues and Problems

"We need a new teaching method to prepare students to go out into our fast-changing world, or they will be unable to understand and learn in our fast-changing society."

"Modernize standards and acquaint teachers with the everyday problems students will face when they leave school."

"Schools need increased flexibility of curriculum, attempting to make the material relevant to the students' present day-to-day needs as well as their future training."

"Sociology and psychology courses will teach students about people around them and will teach them to have respect for all kinds of people."

"(Schools need) a better or broader social education fraternization with people of all races and backgrounds."

"The very greatest lack in my high school education was its segregated nature. My career opportunities have been greatly hampered because I didn't go to school with black people or chicanos. I think the lack of this kind of experience has been very hard to live with."

"More freedom for teaching relevant issues, even if they are controversial."

Sex Education

"Sex education would be totally beneficial to the students."

"I believe strongly that courses dealing openly and informatively with sexual education should be placed in the otherwise censored system which existed when I was in high school."

"A course in sex education could be beneficial to all students instead of general health."

"Received no sex education, but it would have been good to have in junior high curriculum."

"Co-educational sex education should be offered at the earliest possible age."

"Health is outmoded and should be replaced with sex education, drug information, marriage and home life, or some similar course."

Marriage and Family-Life

"Should have had a marriage and family course. They've got to know what type of responsibilities their sex drive will put them into."

"In homemaking the girls learned about home and family living, but it isn't fair for the girl to know and her husband not to know. It takes two to raise children well."

"Offer some sort of sex education and married-life courses."

"I think for the many girls who will be mothers they should offer courses in child care and psychology. There are too many young mothers neglecting their children in cleanliness, nutrition and stimulation their little minds need."

"Make more subjects available for the student who is not college-bound, especially girls planning to marry. They teach you very little about married life or raising children, especially the emotional side of it.... There ought to be marriage counseling in high school."

"Offering classes for family life later in years. Better sex education programs."

"There should be fields in family planning, marriage and financial expenses. What to plan for just in living in today's age."

"I didn't learn how to raise children and how to handle marital problems."

"(High school needed) child-care courses."

"More courses that could be applied for credit that do pertain to bettering one's life, such as ecology, simplified home repairs, practical application of home chemistry, prevention of illness, health maintenance."

Social Problems

"Totally beneficial to the students (would be) group discussions on drugs."

"Should have mandatory courses in pregnancy, drugs, alcohol and other problems, and how to deal with them."

"High school should emphasize more practical education, such as ... sex problems ... drug problems."

"They could have had a good discussion from a doctor or nurse on venereal disease, mental hygiene, social problems, etc."

"Offer more humanities, art history, anthropology, philosophy, comparative religion, more freedom in independent studies, contemporary arts and media, psychology, health and nutrition, sex education, drug education, anything that appeals to contemporary students' curiosity and spontaneous needs. Less moral pedantics in terms of life problems (sex, drugs)."

Religious Emphasis

"Teachers having healthier attitudes toward religion and life in general."

Techniques of Problem-Solving

"If teachers and administration could present attitudes and materials to show that no one has all the right answers, high school could be more educational and less of a learn-by-rote affair. While this would be most difficult, it would add to the student's awareness of people and events around him that are not what he is accustomed to."

"There should be more opportunities for students who need and want to learn more on problem-solving; where they can go and what to look for when they are confronted with a problem."

"The main thing that would make the school more useful would be designing courses to teach students how to think, not how to memorize or mimic."

"(My 'best' teacher) showed me the importance of making up my own mind without help, whether right or wrong. This has helped me in every way of life."

Consumer Education

"I think every high school should have a one-semester course where a student is taught to balance a checkbook and consumer problems such as leases, other contracts, wills, making loans, buying a car, insurance, etc. I think this should be a course called "Everyday Living," because not all students take bookkeeping or business courses. This course should deal with problems of living that everyone encounters regardless what his station in life, and should be open to boys and girls. I think it should be required."

"The system could offer a more varied line of courses to cover the business field, in particular to prepare the student to handle his financial affairs better."

"What I didn't learn in high school or college was how to manage a home, a budget, buy groceries, clothes, furniture, how to buy a car, how to handle business relations."

"High school should emphasize more practical education such as dealing with people, employer-employee relations, money problems and ways of solving them, how to buy a home, car, etc., and ways of seeking jobs.

"For students who do not plan to go on to college (and even those that do) -- a course in everyday money management, how to get a loan, investments, how to handle yourself at job interviews, how to really use a library, information on credit ratings, how to recognize dependable company from a bad one (i.e., how to get a good car), or how to go about getting insurance."

"How to apply for a job and what the requirements for certain jobs are."

"Provide courses dealing in simple everyday business (monetary) transactions."

A number of women respondents said homemaking courses offered invaluable preparation for "life." The total value of homemaking courses was seen in some instances as far greater than learning sewing and cooking skills. The value of marriage and family life courses covering the responsibilities of married life, including child care, budgeting, and family management, was expressed frequently.

Some responses touched on need for education about drugs, venereal disease, and mental hygiene. Some respondents quoted Scriptures and one strongly advocated the meditative arts.

Specific consumer education needs mentioned were money management, budgeting, how to get a loan, investments, information on credit ratings, how to handle job interviews, and employer-employee relations.

Typical comments from former students who saw a need for more emphasis on curriculum to enhance life-coping skills include the following:

"When I was going to high school, the primary purpose was college preparatory and not grooming for life."

"Even if an additional year or extra courses for the year are required, a student should be aware of the variety of fields open to him. This would not just get a job -- but would be to enrich their personal, private lives."

"More social problems classes, psychology and involvement classes."

"I didn't understand that English and literature are the things that you need to form a personality, communicate, and have a basic understanding of people."

"The high schools could offer more human relations courses. The high school cannot teach the student everything. It can only guide him in the right direction."

"Provide courses dealing in human relations."

"Not to stress the importance of college as much as offer more practical courses, such as how to apply for a job and what the requirements for certain jobs are."

Usefulness of Courses

Respondents made numerous comments concerning the usefulness of high school courses, both in working and in "everyday living." The following are typical examples of these comments.

"I don't like some of the courses we had to take. Because I don't think it would help us all that much in the future."

"Students possibly cannot relate high school requirements to life experiences."

CHAPTER 9

COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The majority of former high school students who participated in cooperative vocational training in high school now hold favorable opinions concerning the cooperative aspects of the programs.

Of the 1,180 former cooperative vocational students surveyed in the Texas Education Product Study, 891 (just over 75%) reported a favorable attitude toward the cooperative aspects. Favorable opinions increased over the five-year period of 1964-1969.

An analysis of the former students' opinions showed the following results:

Favorable (891)

1964 Graduates: 290
1969 Graduates: 560

1964 Dropouts: 16
1969 Dropouts: 25

Total Graduates: 850
Total Dropouts: 41

Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable (201)

1964 Graduates: 62
1969 Graduates: 127

1964 Dropouts: 7
1969 Dropouts: 5

Total Graduates: 189
Total Dropouts: 12

Unfavorable (88)

1964 Graduates: 32
1969 Graduates: 49

1964 Dropouts: 2
1969 Dropouts: 5

Total Graduates: 81
Total Dropouts: 7

A numerical summary of the "favorable" and "unfavorable" attitudes toward the cooperative programs is presented below.

Courses and Opinions	Frequency 1963-64 Graduates	Frequency 1963-64 Dropouts	Frequency 1968-69 Graduates	Frequency 1968-69 Dropouts
Vocational Agriculture				
Favorable	108	5	147	7
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	20	1	35	0
Unfavorable	5	0	10	0
Vocational Distributive Education				
Favorable	70	1	131	5
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	22	2	37	1
Unfavorable	11	1	15	1
Vocational Health Occupations				
Favorable	24	2	57	6
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	10	1	30	0
Unfavorable	5	2	17	0
Vocational Homemaking				
Favorable	138	11	249	15
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	21	2	43	1
Unfavorable	16	1	29	2
Vocational Industrial Education				
Favorable	48	1	91	3
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	17	1	33	0
Unfavorable	10	2	14	1
Vocational Office/Business				
Favorable	72	1	179	3
Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable	11	0	29	0
Unfavorable	8	1	23	0

The approximate times at which former cooperative students in both the 1963-64 and 1968-69 groups chose their career fields are summarized as follows:

Approximate Time of Career Choice	Frequency			
	1963-64		1968-69	
	Graduates	Dropouts	Graduates	Dropouts
During Elementary School	20	1	30	1
During Junior High School Years	15	0	49	5
During High School Years	71	1	171	8
While Attending Junior or Senior College	38	1	87	0
While Working on a Job After Leaving Formal Education	114	7	144	2
While Studying in a Proprietary School After Leaving Formal Education	6	0	11	0
No Decision as Yet	26	1	74	6

The 1968-69 group of respondents perceived their first jobs to be more closely related to their high school training than did their counterparts of five years earlier. A comparison of the perceived relationships between high school training and first jobs is presented in the following table.

Perceived Relationship Between High School Courses and First Jobs	Frequency			
	1963-64		1968-69	
	Graduates	Dropouts	Graduates	Dropouts
Almost Completely Unrelated	49	4	73	1
Somewhat Related	94	2	164	4
Closely Related	29	0	49	5
Directly and Very Closely Related	29	1	81	2

Both the 1963-64 and 1968-69 groups of former cooperative vocational students rated Mathematics, Typing/Shorthand, and Vocational Agriculture (in that order) as their "most valuable high school course" in relation to their first jobs.

Respondents from the 1968-69 group rated the same courses, in the same order, as the "most valuable" in relation to their present jobs.

Mathematics, English, and Typing/Shorthand (in order of frequency) were rated as the "most valuable" courses in relation to present jobs by respondents from the 1963-64 group.

A summary of the fields in which the former vocational students indicated they plan further studies is presented in the following table.

Areas of Further Study or Training	Frequency			
	1963-64		1968-69	
	Graduates	Dropouts	Graduates	Dropouts
Agriculture/Agribusiness	10	0	35	1
Communications and Media	6	0	16	1
Construction/Engineering	8	0	29	3
Crafts or Trades (Skilled)	14	1	49	3
Education	53	3	114	5
Electricity/Electronics	13	1	38	2
Equipment Operation	3	0	17	1
Finance	16	0	25	0
Government (Public Service)	13	0	22	2
Health Occupations	15	1	53	0
Manufacturing	5	2	7	0
Marketing and Distribution	13	1	26	2
Personal Services	7	1	16	0
Office/Clerical	27	2	71	5
Transportation	4	1	9	1
Other*	37	0	74	5

*This category includes:

1963-64: Accounting, Art, Banking, Business Machines, Business Management, Computer Programming, Engineering, English, English History, Education, Fire Technology, History, Homemaking, Law, Mechanics, Oriental Arts, Photography, Psychology, Real Estate, Respiratory Therapy, Religion, Social Work, and Veterinary Medicine.

1968-69: Accounting, Air Conditioning, Art, Business Management, Computer Programming, Decorating, Flying, Game Warden, Homemaking, Inhalation Therapy, Law, Law Enforcement, Lab Technician, Liberal Arts, Library Science, Mechanics, Medical, Music, Nursing, Oil, Physical Education, Pharmacy, Photography, Religion, Social Work, Sociology, Textiles, Welding, and Mechanical Design.

A summary of the types of institutions in which the respondents plan to take further studies or training is presented in the following table.

Types of Institutions	Frequency 1963-64 Graduates	 Dropouts	 1968-69 Graduates	 Dropouts
Apprenticeship Training	13	1	27	3
Correspondence School	20	6	13	2
Evening High School	2	2	10	3
Vocational School	7	0	33	2
Business College	8	1	39	1
Technical Institute	3	0	29	1
Junior College	24	1	65	5
Senior College	53	1	136	1
Professional or Graduate School	45	0	87	2

CHAPTER 10

OPINION CHANGES TOWARD COURSES SINCE HIGH SCHOOL

"I'm still discovering books we should have had before graduation."

OPINION CHANGES TOWARD COURSES SINCE HIGH SCHOOL

Approximately 30% (1,529) of the 5,063 members of the sample reported that they have changed their opinions about one or more courses they took in high school.

Of those respondents who reported having changed opinions about courses, 1,343 named specific courses about which they had changed opinions. The percentages used in the following table are based on 1,343 responses as equalling 100%.

SUBJECT AREA	FREQUENCY OF OPINION CHANGES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL OPINION CHANGES
English and Literature	322	23.97%
Mathematics	217	16.15
*Social Sciences	171	12.73
*Natural Sciences	128	9.53
Typing/Shorthand	117	8.71
*Foreign Languages	91	6.77
Bookkeeping	75	5.58
Fine Arts	60	4.46
ALL OTHERS	162	12.06

* Courses toward which the opinion changes were predominantly negative.

The directions of opinion changes (whether now positive or now negative) in 13 subject areas are summarized in the following table.

SUBJECT AREA	NEGATIVE OPINION CHANGES	POSITIVE OPINION CHANGES
Bookkeeping	10%	90%
English and Literature	41	59
Fine Arts	36	64
Foreign Languages	53	47
Health and Physical Education	50	50
Mathematics	38	62
Natural Sciences	60	40
Social Sciences	55	45
Typing/Shorthand	14	86
Vocational Agriculture	37	63
Vocational Homemaking	32	68
Vocational Industrial Education	27	73
Vocational Office/Business	31	69
ALL OTHER	49	51

Reasons for Changing Opinions

The reasons the respondents gave for their opinion changes may be categorized as follows:

- They found that the course was useful -- or not useful -- in a practical sense.
- They either gained or lost interest in the subject after leaving high school.
- They formed the realization that the high school teacher was either more or less competent than they had assumed at the time.
- Upon entering college, they found that they were either well- or poorly-prepared by their high school courses.
- Because of subsequent experiences, they changed their over-all attitude as to the value of high school education in general and elected to make generalized comments rather than to cite specific courses.
- They realized they did not put sufficient effort into their high school studies.
- They believed their high schools failed them in that courses they now believe to be important were not offered.

Although most of the comments made by respondents about opinion changes were related to specific courses, a substantial number referred generally to college preparation, attitude toward education, and student effort. Some generalized comments are as follows:

Comments Concerning College Preparation

"I was much better prepared for college than many of my fellow students in college, due to the superior education I received."

"I thought when I left high school, I could have no trouble in college. Instead I found I was not as well prepared as people from other schools."

"When I got to college, I realized I was not prepared."

"Quality as well as depth of course offerings (that were available to me) is markedly inferior to most people at my college."

"I really felt good towards my high school until I reached college and found I was so unprepared."

"I never realized what a good program my high school had until I saw other situations. Also, I never realized how well my high school prepared me for college."

"Different discipline required for college assignments; material covered in high school fine, but spoon-fed by teachers in small doses. Result is almost complete shock and disorientation in college. Many drop out because they can't make such a radical mental shift of gears."

"I thought public school was all right until I had to compete with fellow students at a private college."

"I found myself better prepared than most other college students my age."

Comments Concerning Change in Attitude Toward Education

"All courses are far more favorable now."

"I have learned the value of greater education."

"I was disillusioned at the irrelevancy of most courses. Now I think the preparation was worthwhile."

"I have matured a little since then and have realized how important education is."

"I had a negative attitude toward school at the time, did not see the use in most courses until years later when they could be applied to real circumstances."

"I now see how all these courses are a unity, and that they are not autonomous, that they are one under God."

"I just wish I could have been more motivated towards school as a whole."

"Since growing older, I can now realize the benefit of education."

"I feel better toward all of them now. It's best to know it all."

"I have realized the value of all courses, and that I was much better prepared than I figured I was."

"I now realize and appreciate the importance and usefulness of my high school training and am amazed at how much I use it in all phases of my life. In high school I wasn't aware of this."

"I feel that all of the courses have more value in preparing anyone for being a more interested and interesting person than I realized at the time."

"All of the subjects are important to all if only the experience you gain in knowing a little about each, even though the school didn't provide for some of the subjects listed."

"I felt maybe the required subjects were a waste of time, but now I can look back and see they helped broaden my understanding and interest and helped make me a more rounded person."

"Since I was required to take practically all of these courses, I naively assumed that all would be of value to me."

"I took predominantly courses that prepared me for college, but since I didn't go, they haven't helped me much in getting a job."

"Education is so general that it doesn't really prepare you for immediate employment."

"The high school system is so general that it doesn't offer a lot for the person at either extreme, whether college-bound or going directly to a job."

"I don't think that I fully developed my potentials, and I think that if I had, I would have been better prepared to enter the outside world."

Comments Concerning Student Effort

"If I had applied myself during my school years, I would have benefitted from it."

"The Art class was used as a dumping ground for all the thugs. I took Art one semester in high school, then gave it up as a lost cause at that school. I pursued it on my own and have taught Art for four years now."

"I tried Shorthand, but couldn't quite get it. I realize if I had tried harder and had taken Bookkeeping, I would have no problems getting a good job."

"I wish I had tried harder to study Math and English so that I could understand it better now."

"I made rather good grades in English Literature, but as far as literature was concerned, I really couldn't grasp it as well as I feel that I can now."

"I should have applied myself more in Mathematics as I now love Math."

"I didn't like English while I was in school. But now I wish that I understood it more."

"I wish I had studied (History) harder as most of our political situations are based on it, and I have to refer to my old books to refresh my memory."

"If I could go back, I'd work harder and get more out of the (Business) courses."

"The problem was not the courses, but a happy-go-lucky attitude on my part."

"More mature attitude toward (Art, English) and further education have increased my interest."

"I wish I had been more attentive and tried to learn the material offered."

Comments Concerning Subject Areas

Typical comments, favorable and unfavorable, are listed below under the various subject headings.

Bookkeeping

"I did not take Bookkeeping in high school and realize now that I really could have used it in a secretarial job I had for 1½ years."

"I never took (Bookkeeping), but perhaps if I had, it would be easier to find a job."

"I had to learn (Bookkeeping) on my own from scratch when I started working."

"I see why (Bookkeeping) is essential. I think everybody should be required to have it."

"Now I'm in business for myself, Record Keeping really helps me."

"I didn't realize what value (Typing, Shorthand, and Bookkeeping) would be in the business world until I went to work. I am assistant manager of a store and run a full office using all three of these skills."

"Bookkeeping doesn't relate to future jobs. I wanted to take it for preparation in a future job, but it doesn't really teach you anything."

"Bookkeeping gave me the background I needed to understand college accounting and assisted me personally in handling a budget."

"I didn't like (Bookkeeping) because it took so much time, but I'm a business major and would be doing better if I had taken it."

English Literature

"In English Literature we learned too much poetry and didn't reach enough classics. I'm still discovering books we should have had before graduation."

"In English more emphasis (should be put) on proper spelling and 'How to Spell'."

"I could not stand the English department, but now feel that it was great."

"I think we should study more than just English Literature. I'd like to see literature from other countries."

"A lot of the material (in English Literature) was presented with no relevance to your present situation or you personally or your age group, etc."

"English course should have stressed vocabulary more -- essentials -- but not necessarily such things as diagramming."

"School seems to have improved. English courses, etc., are more liberal and flexible."

"I've discovered that my English courses were better than average."

"The English Literature courses placed little emphasis on contemporary literature, and they were extremely hesitant to allow a book that wasn't of a puritanical nature."

"I can truthfully say my freshman year of grammar in high school was a waste. That year is very important. Literature needs more emphasis for those who like it."

"One learns a lot about life through English Literature. During high school years, I was not mature enough to realize the value."

"English Literature was the area that gave me the most trouble in college, and it seemed a better high school background would have helped."

"I think there was not enough emphasis placed on composition and literature, as far as preparing for college."

"I failed freshman English three times due to the shortcomings of my English training."

"College English is concerned mostly with theme writing. No experience in high school."

"High school writing composition fundamentals have proved relevant and valuable in college work on themes and thesis."

"Writing in English (essays, etc.) is helpful when you do research in college."

"Ive found out that four years of English courses in high school is of great importance toward the preparation of English courses in college."

"Preparation in English was very good. I validated freshman English."

"(Because of English and Literature) I was prepared to write themes on any subject in a minute's notice or to interpret poems and other literature that was extremely necessary in college."

"I should have paid more attention to English. I need it now. I should have forced myself to have learned it."

"Had I had to take (English Literature) again, I would take a different attitude towards it, trying to do my best and get the most out of it. I now find it to be more than just being in class and narrowly making it."

"English Literature seemed boring to me, but now I would like to read some of the classics again."

"Since completing 15 hours of college English, I can see greater relevance in literature and writing (expressing one's thoughts)."

"I think (English) is very important in life, but should be taught more than what I had."

"English is needed by everyone in every walk of life."

"At the time I was in high school, I considered (English) courses nonsense. But I now realize the value of them."

"My English teacher and I did not get along, but once in college I came to appreciate what he had taught us in class -- not only about English, but life as well. I will always remember him."

"While in school, I could see no practical use for studying English. I could communicate with my friends very well at that time. But we used many words that were slang, and the words were not known outside our community. While traveling abroad, I have met many foreigners who speak excellent English. But if you use slang, then you lose them and have a hard time communicating with them. It's sad to think that you can't communicate in your own language."

"I felt at the time that my English Literature teacher was very well qualified, but since leaving high school, I have decided her to be a very poor one."

"My English teacher did teach me how to love books."

Fine Arts

"In Fine Arts I needed much more training."

"Although Choir isn't as important as I once believed, it did help me to enjoy high school."

"I've learned to enjoy music of all kinds. There is lots of expression in music."

"I'm a music major in college and have become increasingly aware of the unnecessary shortcomings of music and art courses. They are so important for a fully developed human being and are so underemphasized."

"I feel that everyone should be encouraged to take at least one course in speech. I think that this helps the shy or introverted student gain self-confidence, and it helps them to realize that nearly everyone is a little reluctant to get up before a group of people and speak."

"Speech -- In college one has to interact with other people in class and out."

"Study of Fine Arts on a university level, or any other subject that is of your interest is important."

"Art and music are essential to a well-rounded education."

"I could see no use in using Speech, but I can now."

"Speech -- because no matter what line of work you're in, you need to be able to express yourself best."

"Later in junior college I realized how important public speaking can be."

"There is a place of high repute for the Fine Arts in our society, and there should be."

"I thought I was going to coach. Instead, I entered the radio-announcing profession. I had no opinion of Speech; ultimately I needed it."

"Speech is a very important subject that helps a person in learning how to communicate to others in this ever-growing world. A man who is speechless in his life is a man who doesn't succeed!"

"Hardly any Fine Arts courses were available."

"No Fine Arts were offered, but we had a very small Band."

Foreign Languages

"I feel there should be more stress on the importance of Foreign Language -- especially Spanish."

"I find that the little (Spanish) I know has helped me in a number of ways."

"My Foreign Language training has proved much more valuable than I would have thought it would be."

"I didn't feel a need for Foreign Language in high school, and now I wish I had taken at least Spanish since we live in Texas."

"Latin is more relevant, can see more use in college."

"I believe that a Foreign Language should be mandatory as it is in European countries."

"Spanish was not helpful for understanding or speaking of the Spanish language."

"My Spanish teacher was more interested in flirting with the boys than in teaching."

"French and Spanish were the least student-oriented courses."

"If I would have taken Spanish for more than one year, my job would have been easier."

"I use some Spanish in my teaching of Texas History, so it has proved to be a useful course."

"In my work I sometimes come in contact with Spanish-speaking people."

"The teachers I took Foreign Languages from I feel were not as qualified as they should have been."

"Foreign Language is my major in college, and high school French and German did not help me at all -- too elementary and too short of timespan. Should begin much earlier in school."

"I've discovered that my French courses were barely adequate."

"Foreign Languages (taught) mechanics but not working knowledge."

"I have no use for (Spanish), and I didn't learn it as well as I should have."

"I thought Spanish would be of value. It has proved to be of no value to date."

"The Spanish language they teach in school does not help. I spent two years in Spain and had to learn it all from scratch. In school it is taught completely wrong."

"I've been able to use the language in Spain on several occasions."

"We didn't have enough Foreign Languages."

Health and Physical Education

"Physical Education was extremely useful in keeping me in shape, but useless -- it made me antagonistic to 'athletic programs,' coaches responsible for them, and 'athletes' because of their unfair and imbalanced emphasis, especially on discipline for discipline's sake rather than for order's sake."

"Health and Physical Education teachers at fault here as I enjoy and love sports."

"P.E. and Health were not much more than study halls or less."

"In P.E. the facilities of the university are far superior and not in overall approach that much more expensive. I suggest an elective program of various activities with all academic pressure taken off to enable students to enjoy the activity itself."

"In Health and Physical Education, took few exercises and played. If you were uncoordinated, they didn't seem to help much."

"P.E. program did not have enough activities offered. Not enough room for girls to use."

"P.E. program for girls was very poor -- no interscholastic competition, no real P.E. training other than the drill team. Gave no competition or training in any sports."

"Health was pretty good, taught by male coach in the summer."

"I now realize the importance of keeping physically fit. In high school, P.E. was not presented in such a manner as to make me realize that P.E. was for my benefit. It was presented more as something everyone had to do, whether you were capable or not. I think P.E. should also teach why you are exercising everyday and why you are taught games, not only how to play."

"As I got older (21), I realized how important it is to be physically fit, to keep up general good health and tone of muscles. Weight is too easily put on when no regular program of exercise is practiced."

"Health and P.E. need more stress."

"I took Band instead of P.E., and I think I needed the exercise and coordination and athletic ability that P.E. teachers teach the students."

"As Health and P.E. major in college, I see more relevance in them now."

Mathematics

"Math helps more than anything."

"Mathematics has proven to be even more important and valuable then I had expected."

"Advanced Math courses were of no use to me at all except on the CEEB exam at Texas U."

"Did not do well in Geometry partly because the teacher was bored and boring. He was actually a coach."

"I have found how useful Math is to the finance business and everyday problems."

"I have really enjoyed the knowledge received in Math, especially in my present field."

"I see no point in taking Algebra and Higher Math unless you are going to be an engineer."

"My Math teachers were really the worst I had overall. I never had one that could actually teach the course."

"Math courses were then outdated and obsolete -- did not even prepare students for college Mathematics."

"Math didn't equip me for advanced Math in college. I now realize that I should have had more introduction to calculus."

"I thought I would need a good Math background if I went to college, and I found it was not necessary."

"The only courses of true value to me were Mathematics, necessary for college. With that exception, I could have afforded to skip high school entirely and go on to college."

"Mathematics in high school was hard, and I realized later that while it was difficult, it should have been. I was prepared for college in Math."

"Math wasn't deep enough, not enough variety. Courses in college go into more depth than is normally covered in high school."

"I feel students should have more of a background in Mathematics in elementary and junior high grades."

"I have hardly ever used (Math) and now do not attach the same importance to them I once did."

"The (Mathematics) courses I took in high school helped me in college. I didn't realize the value of them until I drew on my background knowledge in college."

"I didn't realize until I reached college how sound a background I had in the Math courses. We purchased a new type of textbook individually and approached Math by the 'new method.' Others graduating from schools in some other school districts did poorly in college algebra taught also by the 'new method' to which they had not been previously introduced."

"Because I was able to take so much Math in high school, it made college easier."

"Algebra I is too easy for math-oriented students. Should offer more advanced courses."

"At the time I thought all (the Math) you needed was addition, subtraction, and division. Now I realize I need to know a lot more like figuring ounces, yards, etc."

"I wish I had taken the time and energy to fully understand Geometry and Trigonometry."

Natural Sciences

"I enjoy the outdoors and am glad I can explain some of nature to my sons. I did not do well in Biology in school, but I guess I did learn."

"Chemistry had little value as to my work in college or to my present job."

"I have no use for (Natural Sciences) in the field I am now pursuing -- secretarial work."

"Often they don't make exception (in Natural Sciences) for slower students."

"Bad (Natural Sciences) teachers didn't know their subject."

"I realize now the value of (Biology) and that I had a good teacher."

"Chemistry was not hard enough."

"Course in Physics was poorly managed due to no student participation."

"I was never interested in (Biology). My first job was as a Dental Assistant, and I really became interested in things I never liked before."

"The lab work (in Biology) was interesting -- actual contact and application."

"After entering veterinary medicine my freshman year in college, I found I had a very poor background (in Chemistry and Biology) as compared to students from different schools."

"They taught you nothing (in Biology) that was of any use in college courses."

"Courses in Natural Sciences did not put me on a level comparable to my peers in college."

"I didn't realize how important (Chemistry) was until I went to college. I think students of agriculture who plan to get a formal education should be told about the importance of Chemistry, Biology, etc."

"Had a very good chemistry teacher who prepared us for college chemistry."

"In high school I didn't feel like I learned much in Chemistry or Biology, but when I got into the college courses, I found that I had picked up more than I thought."

"I thought (Chemistry) was useless and too hard, but it gave me a good head start when I got into college chemistry. It was one of the few courses that helped me in nursing."

"Had I devoted more time to (Natural Sciences), it would have been easier to understand my environment."

Social Sciences

"History is very seldom needed now. What should be (taught) instead is something about problems of today."

"Social Sciences were taught without real concern on how the past can relate to today's problems. It was boring and very unuseful in life."

"Civics should be drastically changed. Since 18-year-olds are voting, they should get a lot more information. (The course) needs revision."

"I thought (Civics) might be useful once -- it was worthless."

"I've found (Civics and Economics) can be applied to everyday life. At that time they seemed unimportant."

"Economics was not offered, and I didn't know enough about it to take it in college. Now I'm supposed to be able to teach it."

"Sociology was not even taught."

"When I took History in college, I found out that most of the things I was taught were half truths, slanted views, and actual lies to make the U.S. and some people look like heroes, which they weren't."

"Courses (in Civics, History, Economics) were not presented realistically, and material was mostly inaccurate."

"Why not have History courses where the study curriculum deals with 'now,' not only 1945 and back? I've had only one course where we actually reached World War II, but none have gone any further. I'd prefer to study Viet Nam or even Korea, so I'd better understand what's happening now."

"History was too repetitive. Not all the facts."

"Sociology was too narrow in scope."

"In college I find Economics very interesting and think more should be offered in high school."

"I've developed an interest in World History that was very poorly presented in high school."

"History and Civics were more of good citizenship classes than true History and Civics. When I took History in college, it was like a complete different History."

"Social Sciences were biased."

"I strongly believe the Civics and History courses are not good. There's a lot of room for improvement."

"Need more Government to prepare a person with a more useful meaning of government."

"I would rate (History) favorably because today History is what improves the future."

"The teachers (of Civics and Economics) didn't make it interesting. They went strictly by the book -- not related to current events."

"The teaching methods (of Social Sciences) were boring and the student grew tired of rote memorization."

"Teacher held the class's interest (in Psychology) -- did not teach from books. More personal opinion and class discussion."

"History came alive through the teacher."

"In history you are always told how the pilgrims got here, how Columbus discovered America, but you ARE NEVER told how or why the Aztec or Maya Indians are never given credit as to them being the true first inhabitants of America, and many more hidden truths."

"History needs to be taught more in detail in high school."

"The (Social Sciences) courses I took seemed to be out of date. There was not enough relevance concerning today."

"(History) courses should be modern history instead of ancient history."

"History is very helpful because you need some background in it to be able to converse intelligently when an historical event is brought up."

"Should be more emphasis on learning History and other Social Sciences. These courses are far more valuable to individuals later than many high school students realize."

"I always knew History was valuable. However, having been around the world and in Europe, I wish I knew more."

"I think now that the Social Sciences are important in our understanding of our culture and our way of life and what's happening to our country."

"Since I have graduated, the material I covered (in Civics and Economics) has come up almost daily. I would love to 'repeat' these courses now that they seem more relevant to me."

"The World Cultures History courses was enlightening. I discovered the importance and relevance of this History course a few years later."

"History was very poorly taught in high school, mainly because of uninterested teachers, really coaches, not teachers."

"The (Social Science) teacher didn't give students a chance to develop ideas politically which differed from his own."

"In college I realized that History is very important and can be very interesting if presented properly."

"Social Sciences were taught by people who were more interested in sports than the meaning of social sciences."

"I took (History, Civics) in summer school, taught by coaches. They were very easy, but I didn't learn anything."

"My college studies convinced me that my high school History had been simplistic and prejudiced, or rather the manner in which it was taught."

Typing and/or Shorthand

"Typing and Shorthand helped me progress faster in business school."

"Typing assisted training in keypunch operations. Without having taken typing I would not have worked as well for a company."

"It's hard to get a job as (an office) clerk without typing. Anyone halfway interested in business should take this -- boys and girls alike."

"Shorthand didn't seem important to me in high school, but now it helps me pay my rent (and that is fairly important, I would say)."

"Many of the jobs offered to women required Typing."

"I took Typing in school for an easy credit. But most likely it serves me good which helps me in a lot of ways (in) my job in the service."

"Everyone should take typing. I cannot over-evaluate that course. I took heavy pre-college courses, which I adored. However, when I went in to that different world of earning money, I realized the value of business and vocational courses. With my college I was highly trained for nothing that would support a family."

"When I left high school (with Typing and Shorthand training), there weren't any offices that would hire me without experience."

"I thought I would be good enough to get a job with (Typing and Shorthand) skills, but the courses were too brief."

"I still feel that Shorthand was a waste of my time and everybody else's. Typing was advanced enough."

"Typing should be a mandatory course."

"I now realize how very important Typing and Shorthand education is even if one attends and graduates from college. This experience and knowledge is indeed valuable."

"Typing and Shorthand are such dry subjects, they are hard to make interesting under the best of circumstances."

"Typing is very important all throughout life. However, in high school I was never made to understand the real importance of it."

"Typing has proved to be invaluable in both college and my job."

"I didn't want to take Typing, but my mother urged me to. I didn't enjoy it then, but it has greatly helped me in college."

"I wish now I had done a better job in Typing. I didn't type well enough to get the job I wanted."

"When I was in school, I didn't plan on working, but now I have a family, and it has been very hard for me to find a job. A lot of places here want some one with the knowledge of (Bookkeeping, Mathematics, Shorthand), which I don't have.

Vocational Agriculture

"Vocational Agriculture was just a relaxing course in high school, but I make my living out of what I learned in Ag. class."

"In high school Vocational Agriculture seemed rather ho-hum. Now I realize that Agriculture teacher teaching it like a science was a very important thing. It's not a 'Mickey Mouse' subject like so many people think."

"Though I enjoyed Vocational Agriculture, I really have not been able to utilize what I learned, nor have others (for the most part) who attended school with me."

"Vocational Agriculture just doesn't apply to my field."

"I now wish I had taken another course in Agriculture as I have become more interested in this field."

"Agriculture was not as broad a subject as I think it should have been."

"I didn't like Vocational Agriculture at the time, but it helped a lot later. At the time I was in school, I just wasn't interested in any school work."

Vocational Distributive Education

"I realize now the importance of Distributive Education. Then I did not."

"Vocational Distributive Education (was) helpful in getting a job."

"Vocational Distributive Education gives the student a chance to start into the business world ahead of graduation."

Vocational Health Occupations

"Vocational Health Occupations was chosen because now I am a Licensed Vocational Nurse."

"I wanted very much to become a Dental Assistant without having to have so much college and spend so much money. I wish I had taken Health Occupations in high school so I would have something to fall back on in case something happened to my husband."

Vocational Homemaking

"When I was a student, home economics seemed like a waste of time, unjustified, because of lack of information concerning the material taught in the course. I never realized that consumer study, baby care, child development, etc., were taught in high school home ec."

"Homemaking's relevance has been less than anticipated vocationally."

"Homemaking wasn't helpful in teaching. I didn't learn things that would have helped in later years."

"Homemaking really does help after graduation, but not while you're in school."

"The (Homemaking) teacher was too limited -- prejudiced -- in what she was teaching. She was right-handed in sewing, and I was the only left-handed. She found it harder to teach me."

"Our Vocational Homemaking teacher didn't teach the basics in sewing and cooking which are important when starting a home."

"I plan to marry in August -- wish I had more education in Homemaking."

"Homemaking is very helpful when you get married."

"Homemaking seemed too elementary for my taste, but now some of the things help me in saving time as a wife."

"I enjoyed homemaking, but it was not as important and essential as it is to me now. Some phases like vitamins really were boring, but now as a mother, I wish I had paid a little more attention to my teacher."

Vocational Industrial Education

"Courses in Electric Shop set me up for a job. (I am) more appreciative now."

"Shop was not offered."

"Initially poorly oriented (in Industrial Education); however, I can see the importance of this field today."

"I am a Vocational Industrial educator now and feel strongly about its future."

"(My school) needs a better Industrial Education course."

"The Vocational Industrial Education course, although two years of it were offered, was not enough to fully get a knowledge of the basics of it. The course itself was air conditioning and refrigeration."

"Drafting I and II were the best courses I took because they really helped me in working toward my college degree and in getting a job."

Vocational Office/Business

"A woman needs to know something besides being a housewife (like Office/Business) if anything should happen to her husband."

"Vocational courses would have permitted me to observe a career in business more perceptively."

"I found that (Business and Office) were not advanced enough. Too simple. They did not go far enough into the business world to really prepare you."

Business Courses Generally

"Business courses are helpful, but not as realistic to the business world as they claim."

"(There should be) more courses of Bookkeeping, Typing, and Shorthand beyond first year courses."

"I took only one year of bookkeeping and no Business classes. Then after I graduated I decided this is what I wanted to do for a job."

"I wish I had taken more business courses than I did."

"Wish I'd taken more business courses. I feel such would give me better marketable skills."

"I only learned how to type on a manual typewriter. Businesses use electric typewriters. Dictaphones were not offered as a course."

"I never took a business course in high school, but found I enjoyed it in college."

General Vocational

"At the time I felt the vocational courses offered by the school were as good as could be expected. I still feel there should be many more vocational schools (as the one in Houston)."

"My school lacks Vocational courses (except Vocational Agriculture and Vocational Homemaking) which are important and valuable to most students after high school."

"Health Occupations, Vocational Industrial Education, and Distributive Education should be offered in all high schools to enable graduates the opportunity to get jobs who are unable to go to college or (do) not wish to go to college."

"Vocational training. It never occurred to me to prepare for a job if college didn't work out in four years."

"I realize now many of the (vocational) teachers were not qualified as they should have been in my school."

Journalism

"I enjoyed the Journalism courses, but there was no instructions to it. I learned what I did from another student."

"Journalism turned out to be excellent experience in many ways."

Unclassified Comments Concerning Subjects

Other comments made by respondents referred to more than one area of subject matter in their high school curriculum. Typical remarks are given below:

"They didn't prepare you (in English Literature, Foreign Languages, Social Sciences, Industrial Education) for college in the way that you should have been."

"(Math, Trigonometry, Geometry) are a waste of time unless you plan to be a Math major. More emphasis on Foreign Languages due to the requirements for a degree in certain fields in college."

"I learned at college that the English and Math I had were inadequate -- not advanced enough."

"Some courses (English, Literature, Fine Arts, Social Sciences) were not adequate to students entering college."

"English and Math are the two most important in advancing one's education. These are essential in forming a good basis for college work."

"While I always felt that Mathematics and Chemistry would benefit me in college, I had no idea how well they would prepare me for similar college courses."

"If I hadn't had History, Government, Math, and Science, I'd be lost in college."

"I felt that I would be at a disadvantage coming from a small school, but found that I was at least equal to the others in my class as to background materials in (Science and Math)."

"I did not realize how valuable (Science, Math and English) were until I went to college and needed what I had learned."

"In the Social Sciences and Mathematics, I realized I had learned more in high school when I began college courses than I thought I had."

"Though I found (Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Typing and Shorthand) enjoyable in high school, they became increasingly important as I looked back in preparing me for college and nursing school. I feel they did give me a good basis for further study."

"When I got to college, I began to realize how really good the courses in English, Typing and History had been. I was well prepared for college."

"Fine Arts, Foreign Languages should be offered more. In Fine Arts (Art, Drama, etc.) -- more diversity. French and German should be offered and counselors should advise their value."

"Not enough basic fundamentals were taught (in English, Speech, Math), making it hard on a freshman in college to be able to work efficiently without extensive study."

"I did not like (Bookkeeping and World History) or the teachers when I was taking them because I thought the teachers were too hard. I now realize that they were very good teachers and that what they made us do was for our own good."

"After practical application (of Agriculture, Natural Sciences), I realize the value of these courses."

"All courses (Bookkeeping, Fine Arts, and some Vocational courses) offered here are good, but to make a career out of most, you must further your education through college, which I do not believe is right."

"I had some exceptional teachers who excited and stimulated learning, some who bored and discouraged, but most were just run-of-the-mill 'baby-sitters with textbooks.'"

"English Literature and Math both helped me tremendously in college, even though I didn't especially enjoy them at the time."

"I realized how much I had been exposed to in high school (English, Literature, Biology, Math) when I reached college."

"The school needed to offer Shorthand and at least one foreign language for future in business and/or college."

"I took more (Science and Math) in college than I thought and what I had in high school really helped."

"Math and English proved very valuable in college."

"I felt that I had a good background in (Physics, Mathematics). However, after one semester of college, I realize that these two courses were outstanding at my high school and provided me excellent preparation for college."

"I realize now that I should have taken more interest in (English, Literature, Speech) and studied more than I did."

"What I learned in Economics and Mathematics wasn't enough to cover a month's college work."

"I would have taken such courses as Bookkeeping and Shorthand and more Typing to prepare myself a little better for the big world."

"I found that coming from a small town school, the other kids had much more advancement on me in Math and Science and had an entirely different analytical approach to the literature they had had."

"Science is more relevant now, also Math. I understand the importance of Science and Math in our world's future."

"You have to know what's going on (History, Biology, English) to be able to get along in society."

"Literature and History were presented very uncreatively. There was no relevant discussion in class. Football coaches should not be pawned off on History; they are usually unprepared and very non-aware of the world outside football."

"I had some good and bad teachers in English, and I was really never pushed or really kept from being bored in my English classes. It seemed like in both English and Biology, the teacher didn't care if you passed or failed."

"I have never used (Algebra, Plane Geometry) and see no use for me, but I wish I had had Business Math to take."

"I find that in the business world today more than ever, the proper English and the ability to figure mathematics problems quickly is very important."

"English and Math have enabled me to get good jobs, and I feel they have made my personal life more desirable."

"It is a must for South Texas schools to have bilingual education."

"English and Speech are beneficial in communicating intelligently with other people. Reading increases a person's knowledge. The Social Sciences help us learn the basic rules required in our society and ways to improve it."

"I thought of (History, English, Government) as unimportant at the time, but now find they were among the most important."

"Most courses were basic and lacked the bridge between theory and practical usage -- practical application should be stressed."

"I thought (Biology and Mathematics) were irrelevant when I was in high school, and I now find I have more of an interest in them, but not enough basic background material stayed with me."

"When taking Math and Chemistry, I thought they were boring. Now I find Math and Chemistry to be fascinating subjects."

"Drama and regimented English courses were not relevant -- unable to apply learned material to life."

"I have only become more convinced than I already was that my academic courses were a waste of time."

"Foreign Language in high school was a paper exercise, not a speaking one. Unfortunately, Social Sciences are too geared to the past and not the present or future."

"Math and Foreign Language seemed adequate at the time, but actually were little help in preparation for the future."

"The purely academic courses such as Math and Science have been of no value because I have forgotten most of them from disuse. Furthermore, these courses taught me nothing about learning on my own. They were pure memorization."

"I did not realize the extent of creativeness which was lacking in many of my high school teachers."

"I feel that the high schools are in need of instructors who know how to come down the level of the students when explaining how to work problems. I had two instructors who only confused me."

"Some of the courses could have been more interesting to learn if the teachers had more understanding."

"The Math and reading program should be more extensive, and provisions should be made for more individualized instruction in these areas."

"All instruction I received (in English, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences) was favorable, but today I think all education should be relative to the world of work."

"English Literature was not presented both as Sociology and History. It was rote, dull, and required."

"Courses (in English and Social Sciences) should be oriented more toward the relevance of life today. More open class discussion and stating of opinions by class members."

"I enjoyed English Literature and History -- but now it seems like a waste of time because I've forgotten what was learned."

"English and Math are useful instruments in everyday life."

"Natural Sciences and English Literature are the courses I formerly felt were unnecessary, that I now feel important to an overall education."

"As a result of changing socio-economic conditions in the U.S. and the world, the increasing level of international communication and the increasing use of mathematical abstraction in business, courses (in Foreign Language, Mathematics, Social Sciences) give a person a better foundation upon which he can make intelligent decisions than if they were excluded from the basic curriculum."

"I once would have rated both (Math, Foreign Languages) favorably, but I find now neither prepared me further study."

"I couldn't understand what use I would have with (English Literature, Natural Sciences) until I was out of school and have realized that they have really come in handy."

"I now realize the reason why we had to take (English, Biology, Typing, and Shorthand) -- their relevance -- to help understand the changing world."

"It wasn't the teachers' fault they didn't have time to make (History, Math, Sciences) interesting, but some of them acted like they were not interested -- like they were putting out an effort to teach. They didn't have time for slower students like I was in those subjects."

CHAPTER 11

THE "BEST" TEACHER

"He was a teacher ahead of his time in his sensitivity to our interests and opinions, and concern for our individualities. He genuinely wanted us to learn and be interested. He was on fire."

THE "BEST" TEACHER

The "best" Texas high school teacher has the ability to create interest in his subject and to motivate the student, is interested in the students as individuals, is proficient in the subject taught, is dedicated to teaching as a profession, and maintains discipline in his classroom.

These and other qualities of the "best" teacher described by the respondents are summarized in the followintg table.

CHARACTERISTIC	SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE*							TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Ability to Communicate/ Create Student Interest	7.2%	4.3%	3.9%	4.2%	12.1%	4.3%	2.0%	38.0%
Interest in the Students as Individuals	4.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	7.9	2.5	0.8	24.0
Knowledge of Subject	1.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.2	1.3	0.4	9.7
Dedication to Teaching	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.7	1.7	0.5	0.3	7.0
Maintaining Discipline	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.5	1.6	0.3	0.2	3.4
Preparing Students for College	1.5	0.3	0.43	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.0	3.2
Presented a Challenge	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.4	0.4	0.3	4.6
Personality	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.8
Treated Students Fairly	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	1.0	0.3	0.2	2.8
Related Subject to Students' Lives	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.03	1.3

Former Students' Comments on the "Best Teacher"

Ability to Communicate/Create Student Interest

"He was an extremely good instructor. He knows how to keep the young people's attention."

"She brought everything alive, the most interesting teacher I ever had."

"She was enthusiastic, entertaining, and talked to students on their level. She knew how to encourage or scare a student into working. She was understanding."

"She was not much older than the students and had similar interests. This led to free communications in class."

"The instructor required more than just listening to lectures and taking examinations. She stressed panel discussions, research, and informal debates in her class."

"She taught us how to use perception and observation as sources of constructive problem solving."

"She was willing to let our own minds develop. We didn't have to do things her way, exactly as we were told to. By letting me think for myself and not forcing me -- she taught me a lot."

"She made learning fun -- not a contest between students, but a contest of a student with himself, always striving to learn more."

"She made an effort to make her classes interesting and unusual."

"She created an interest in the course material and motivated the students to learn the subject."

"He had a rapport with students."

"She gave you the incentive to work. She enjoyed her work, so you enjoyed it also."

"He allowed a degree of freedom in the course, and he encouraged creativity."

"She was very good at explaining."

"He is a well-informed teacher who has a real talent for instructing young people. He is also a very likeable individual."

"She explained math so that I could understand it in a way I would remember it."

"He took time to explain. You would really get enthusiastic. He'd bring history back to life for you."

"He was the only teacher that made me want to study."

"She was able to create a pleasant atmosphere for even the dullest lessons."

"She generated enthusiasm and concern. The processes of learning were geared up."

"She could communicate and get the message through better than any other teacher. She also had amazing patience and deep understanding."

"She expected the best of us, and had the personality to get it."

"He made it interesting, and I worked harder for my grades."

"He put himself into his classes by demonstrating what we were learning."

"He wasn't the best instructor. He was the best teacher."

"He made an uninteresting course interesting."

"He involved the student in the course."

"He made the class interesting, and he encouraged active participation."

"He always kept the attention of even the least-receptive pupils."

"He could explain to you -- make things clear."

"She tried new methods, she made us feel impelled to learn and free to be ourselves."

"She was interesting, informative and patient. She had a definite flair for teaching."

"She took the time to get through to as many students as possible. She never neglected any."

Interest in the Students as Individuals

"He was really understanding with each student and worked with each individual."

"He acted like he cared about us, and we all learned a lot."

"He got involved with everyone, and did not think only of himself."

"She is a friend as well as a teacher."

"She gave me time and personal attention."

"She had a unique way of believing in someone that everyone else doubted."

"She always treated us as adults, with as much respect as an adult. She was a guide more than a teacher."

"He was considerate, listened to opinions, and was interested and helpful in any situation."

"She taught as if she cared. She also gave me inspiration to continue my education when I needed it the most."

"He was always willing to help his students, as well as seeing to it that he had or made time for us to have an opportunity to seek his advice and help."

"She took the time to show a little personal interest in her students. She convinced me that I could do better in school than I was."

"She showed a genuine interest in her students and provided motivation for those of us who were not all that talented."

"There were other good teachers, but she seemed to care about you and your future, and was able to relate this to you."

"I always felt I could talk freely with her, no matter what my problems were."

"He was one of the teachers who took time to underetand the kids in his class."

"She was most interested in me, as a student and as an individual."

"She was the teacher most interested in the students."

"He made you feel a part of the group, and your part counted just as much as anyone else's."

"He was a teacher ahead of his time in his sensitivity to our interests and opinions, and concern for our individualities. He genuinely wanted us to learn and be interested. He was on fire."

"He viewed his students as persons, not as vessels for his factual outpourings. He taught his subject well, but made it enjoyable for his students. Specifically concerning me, he took his time outside of class to be an educator and friend to me."

"She had an actual interest in what the students did."

"He treated all of us as adults, and left us to our own to decide to make a grade or not."

"She cared! She really cared what happened to each and every one of us."

"She had compassion for all students."

"She took interest in me as a person."

"She was not only interested in us as her students, but as people. She took the time to talk to us about our problems."

"I always felt that she was not only a teacher, but a friend. In my opinion, that is very important to a student."

"He had a lot of understanding and patience for pupils."

"She had a more personal level with students; nobody wanted to give her trouble."

"He was interested in your own personal opinion, and not just looks. He would listen to the individual's point of view."

"She knew how to teach and be your friend at the same time, without letting anyone get away with anything."

"He was a friend, more interested in learning than teaching."

"She took time to get to know her students. She understood our problems and tried to help us discover how to solve them."

"He showed an interest in everyone and helped us develop a sense of responsibility."

"He treated us like people, not animals."

"She treated each student as an individual worthy of dignity. She believed that each student had within him or her a hidden talent waiting to be used and developed."

"The teacher took an active interest not only in the students, but in the entire community."

"She cared about me as an individual, accepted my ideas, and helped me mature into a better person."

"If I had a problem, it was his problem, too."

"She was very involved with the students."

"He was not an unfeeling teaching machine. We were not just numbers on a card to him."

"He took a personal interest in his students."

"She showed a deep interest in students, showing the ability to be their friend, but at the same time requiring that all work met her standards."

Knowledge of Subject

"The way the material was presented, one knew she was experienced in her field."

"She had a great knowledge of the subject, and this made her enthusiastic in the teaching."

"He knew his subject, and tried to pass along his knowledge."

"She was competent in her field, articulate, enthusiastic, dedicated and congenial."

"She knew what she was talking about, and left us with enough to form opinions on our own."

"She knew her subject well, and made it interesting."

"He knew his subject matter and presented the subject in an interesting manner."

"He knew the material which he taught very well. He did not have to refer to written notes. He could also answer questions very well."

"He was well-organized and knew what he was doing."

"She was well-educated. She knew her subject very well."

"She was smart, and she knew the subject she was teaching."

"She knew her subject thoroughly, and how to put it across."

"He was very knowledgeable in his field, and his class was interesting. He was respected."

"She was very knowledgeable in this field and was enthusiastic about it. She encouraged us to 'get involved.'"

"He knew his material and could get across to his students. He was not afraid to discuss controversial issues."

"He was very well-educated and made the classroom a desirable environment to learn in."

"She was always prepared, had interesting lectures, was in control of her class, was knowledgeable in her subject, and always had time to help the individual."

"She had the experience, and could get the lessons across to her students."

"She knew the subject matter well and was able to apply and convey her knowledge to the students."

"He was organized. He provided practical experience in lectures."

"She knew very well the material she taught, and conveyed to us (her class) the intense love and interest she had in French literature."

"She was a warm, friendly person who really knew her stuff (chemistry)."

"She knew her subject backwards and forwards."

"He had personal interest in the student, a vast knowledge of his subject, and scrupulous attention and honesty."

"He was intelligent, and always came to class prepared."

"He knew what he was talking about."

"He was very organized and knew his subject matter perfectly."

"She had the knowledge and patience to teach the students in her class and others who needed help."

"She knew her subject and taught at a level that was mentally stimulating, in that she obviously expected a student to want to know 'why.'"

Dedication to Teaching

"She was always pleasant and she loved the subject. She made me love it, too."

"She knew and loved English and cared enough about her students to challenge them to do things which they hadn't thought they could do."

"She was very interested and excited about her field of history, and she was able to communicate that excitement to me and make me interested."

"She demonstrated interest in her own subject, as well as with the students."

"She loved her subject and conveyed that attitude to her students."

"He seemed to take a personal interest in his work."

"She was conscientious enough to be frustrated when she realized that a good number of her students were bored with her class and school in general."

"She was dedicated, and made the subject interesting."

"He was young and put a lot of feeling into his classes."

"I think the two qualities that a really fine teacher possesses are enthusiasm and expertise in his field. This teacher has both.

"She was interested, and seemed excited about what she was doing."

"He was very much dedicated."

"She was a very good teacher because she enjoyed what she was doing."

"She was there to teach, and that's what she does."

"She liked what she taught, and was enthusiastic and funny."

"Her interests involved only teaching her specific subject, and she knew virtually everything about that particular subject."

"She had a keen and devoted interest in both students and English (and English literature)."

"She tried harder and was always in good spirits and always had time to talk to you."

"He showed interest in teaching."

"She was truly enthusiastic. She knew what she wanted us to learn and she did her best in teaching us."

"She was very enthusiastic about the subject and was one of the nicest persons I've ever met."

"She wanted to make it serious for us. She wanted to teach us. She knew the subject."

"She loved to teach and cared about her students. She was so enthused over her work that we just had to share her feelings."

"She was dedicated and well-educated."

"She was very dedicated, and felt if you didn't do good, it would reflect on her."

"Her presentation was enthusiastic and quite a production."

"She was very devoted to teaching students literature, because she loved it so much.

"She acted as if she cared whether we learned chemistry or not, and was very thorough in her teaching methods."

"She devoted herself to her job, and more to helping us enjoy it."

Maintaining Discipline

"She kept very strict and very good discipline."

"He was a no-nonsense type, but gave credit where it was due."

"He knew when to be firm, but was easy-going."

"He was very strict in class, yet he taught in such a way that you wanted to learn and did learn."

"He was strict, and gave personal help."

"She knew how to keep the class interesting, when to be firm, and when to be lenient."

"She had very few discipline problems, even from kids who were 'holy terrors' in other classes."

"She was hard on the student, and made sure we learned it."

"They kept discipline and helped the students when needed."

"There was good discipline in the class. You worked hard or you dropped out."

"She was friendly, yet firm enough to earn the respect of the students."

"She demanded performance."

"She was a very understanding -- but firm -- person."

"He had control over the class."

"She didn't let pupils talk or 'goof off' in class."

"He commands respect."

"She was able to control the class and at the same time provide an atmosphere inducive to group discussion."

"She was not too strict, but firm in class rules."

"He was very understanding, yet strict."

"She was very strict and would not tolerate talking or any other nonsense while the class was in session; therefore, I learned more in her class than all my other English classes put together."

"She was the best teacher due to her experience, ability to discipline, and the respect she commanded and generated."

"He knew how to be strict in a nice way. He could hold your attention and even reprimand you without putting you down."

"I got about all the discipline they had, but that wasn't enough."

Preparing Students for College

"She prepared me for college."

"She prepared me somewhat for college courses and made English literature more interesting than others."

"In grammar, she paved the way for a good foundation in college."

"In her teaching, she tried to help prepare us for what we might meet in our college courses."

"He aided me in my decision to attend college."

"She was the best teacher, in that she prepared the students for a college education, but was realistic in the respect of understanding and aiding those who had no intentions of attending college."

"Since I have taken college physics courses, I have found that he taught me far more than the average high school physics teacher."

"He taught us in terms of college preparation, which proved to be extremely valuable in freshman English. I felt I was better prepared for English composition than the average student."

"Her class was a great help in college English courses."

"He took much time with me for tournament preparation in speech, and this helped in college."

"I feel she best prepared me for college in terms of subject matter, study habits to do her work assigned, and cognitive output."

"The independent research required in senior English was valuable in preparing me for the work I subsequently did in college."

"She taught a fine college prep course. I finally learned how to take good lecture notes."

"She prepared me well for university math courses."

"She not only taught her class well, but helped the student make decisions about their future and get them started in college."

"She prepared us for college (English and otherwise)."

"I still use his political science notes in college."

"She stressed the portions of the curriculum which would be beneficial to us in college freshman English."

"She really prepared me for college work."

"He started my interest in science, which later led to my physics degree in college."

"She did much to prepare her students for college, and made her course enjoyable."

"She showed me a need for learning typing and shorthand for future college work."

"She covered all aspects of the subject from a practical and an academic view, and this was of much value in college accounting."

"She gave me the best understanding of the subject and gave me a solid foundation applicable to my college work done in the course. Taught you to do research, write papers, and so forth."

Presented A Challenge

"He expected certain accomplishments from us and let us know what they were."

"He made typing a challenging course, which he made me excell in."

"She required prompt, correct work."

"He expected a lot of his students."

"She had the ability to get the most productivity out of 90 percent of the students."

"He was not satisfied with average work. He demanded more work and research than any other teacher, and I was able to really learn from him."

"He extended each student to the absolute limit of the student's capability. One student finished enough math to achieve college level, while many others barely finished a semester's worth."

"She made me get down and do my work."

"She expected a lot from her students (gave them credit for being people who could think)."

"She demanded, and got, the maximum from the students, in a way that made learning a pleasure."

"He knew what he was talking about, and made his course interesting by making it a challenge."

"He made the course very challenging and maintained the student's interest to a great degree."

"They were hard and made you get your lessons."

"She instituted a special seminar class in mathematics and stimulated me to work at my maximum capacity."

"This teacher made me work hard to pass this course, and I did because it was interesting and she motivated me."

"She's the only one who ever made me really exercise my mind."

"She was so disorganized and demanding that if you survived her class, you could work under any boss, no matter how demanding he might be."

"She had a very complete and varied course of study. She demanded a thought process and each individual's last effort."

"She was very demanding, but she also made the course interesting by putting a lot of energy into it."

"She challenged us to think above and beyond."

"She was a firm teacher that knew how to get the work out of you without your hating her for it."

"He was very precise in what you were to learn. He was also able to instill in you the fact that you had to know the subject in order to pass the course."

"He made the subject interesting and a challenge -- although I wasn't especially interested in biology."

"He could teach more in three days than the rest could teach in three weeks. He made us work, and we loved him for it."

"He forced the student to learn a greater amount of material, while simultaneously finding that studying and learning can actually be fun."

"She gave a heavy workload and expected students to be mature and work independently."

Personality

"He was lively, entertaining, as concerned as you were."

"She explains and jokes a lot."

"He was always friendly and was always willing to help out."

"He was friendly and used humorous examples to make his points."

"He was a rather light-hearted personality, and talked to students instead of down to us."

"He had a good personality."

"We got along together."

"He was a very affable person."

"She was kind, considerate and interested."

"I liked his attitude and sense of humor."

"She was very gentle and understanding."

"He was very patient and had a great sense of humor."

"He was kind and got along good with students."

"She was very friendly -- good personality."

"He is down-to-earth, doesn't compare one person to another, and he is a friend to everyone."

"He had a very unique personality and a wonderful method of teaching."

"She showed she was a human being."

"He was easy to get along with -- a nice guy who understands."

"He was good-natured; he wasn't really strict; he was lots of fun."

"He was a good old guy."

"He was a real nice teacher."

"He was patient and easy to talk to."

"He didn't make you feel afraid of him."

"She was a kind and generous person, and probably still is."

"She had a sparkling personality."

Treated Students Fairly

"Both were hard, but fair, and made the course interesting."

"He was not prejudiced."

"She had no 'pets.'"

"She treated students equally in all forms."

"He was demanding, but was a fair teacher."

"He treats students as equals."

"He treated you as an individual and was fair to all concerned."

"She took an interest in the individual, and not by your race, color or creed."

"He did not show favoritism between the students."

"He was a great man and he gave all of his students a fair chance."

"He was hard, but fair. If you did the work, you made it and learned something. If not, you failed."

"He treated his students as equals, and all students admired him."

"He was the fairest, most intelligent and utterly fantastic instructor I've ever had, bar none."

"He was fair, and he made you feel like you learned something when you left the class."

"He was fair and nondiscriminatory."

"He was fair and honest."

"She was very fair. You really had to work in her class in order to pass."

"She was a fair teacher to all, and you could do all right in her class if you applied yourself."

"She didn't show favoritism toward one pupil. We all discussed and participated in everything."

Related Subject to Students' Lives

"She prepared you for the future."

"He related past history with current events, showing how history repeats itself."

"He taught a lot of things that would apply out of school, other than just book work."

"He corresponded the past to events of the day, and taught the importance of establishing values."

"He related the subject to current events."

"She attempted to get her students involved in life."

"They didn't try to soft-sell it. They told it like it was."

"He took interest in the students as people and tried to teach them something that they could use later in life."

"He showed us things in real life, not out of the book."

"He presented the subject matter in such a way that the student could see where the knowledge would benefit a person later in life."

Subjects Taught by the "Best Teacher"

The "best teacher" named by individual former students cam from subject areas having the greatest number of class sections. The percentages following the courses listed below are based upon the number of times the "best teacher" came from that particular field.

Course	Frequency of Mention	Course	Frequency of Mention
English	25.5%	Shorthand	2.2%
Mathematics	13.6	Voc. Homemaking	2.2
History	9.8	Voc. Agriculture	2.2
Biology	7.6	Speech	1.7
Civics/Govt.	5.1	Physics	1.5
Chemistry	4.3	Physical Ed.	1.5
Typing	3.6	Genl. Science	1.3
Bookkeeping	3.0	Art	1.0
Foreign Lang.	2.8	Other*	11.1

*Subjects included in this category were mentioned by less than one percent of the former students. They are, in order of frequency of mention: Latin, Economics, Journalism, Vocational Office Education, Drama, Vocational Distributive Education, Vocational Industrial Education, Business, Choir, Health, Drafting, Cosmetology, R.O.T.C., and Psychology.

The "Worst" Teacher

Although the former students were not asked to name the characteristics of the "worst teacher," a minority of those surveyed implied the teacher characteristics to which they objected in their comments on the "best" teacher.

While the "worst" teacher is not precisely the antithesis of the "best" teacher, the contrasts in the quotations that follow are noteworthy.

"He added to the course with background information not presented in the text, and presented everything in a way that was interesting."

"He went beyond the standard approved textbook and took the course to the college level."

"He appeared to enjoy the students and did not follow the book day in and day out. If something current had happened, we would discuss it. He was the only teacher that really prepared his students in going out into the world."

"He did not teach from the text. He taught from data that he had compiled himself."

"He didn't just follow the book. He'd add new material to the lecture."

"Their knowledge went beyond the textbooks. The only thing the other teachers were interested in was finishing the book, and if you didn't understand it, that was your tough luck. These two teachers offered a give-and-take class, and they treated you like adults -- not tape recorders."

"He did not go by the book. He knew the subject and he could talk to us to help us understand."

"He supplemented the elementary subjects covered in the textbook with material he had read."

"She incorporated materials other than texts."

"He was the best because he didn't give grades. Either you got it right away by studying and asking for help, or you didn't get it."

"She seemed very concerned with the fact that we learned something, rather than just working on a grade."

Competence

"She knew her subject -- it was never dry or boring."

"She knew -- as, I'm sorry to say, many didn't -- what she was talking about."

"She made us work to learn the material, unlike the majority of teachers I had."

"He knew more about his subjects and made them interesting."

"He really cared that each student understand the subject, and he was always willing to help. My other math teachers couldn't have cared less."

"She took time to explain the things you didn't understand, and she didn't rush through everything."

"She was interested in us learning concepts, not trivia."

"She could hold your interest and did not try to stuff it down your throat."

"He gave more details on what the subject was about."

"She was the one teacher I had who could make the classes interesting. We were allowed to have discussions and render opinions."

"She was the first teacher to make literature interesting."

"First, she would smile at the students. Then she would stimulate their own intellectual talents, instead of presenting facts to be memorized."

"She kept my interest throughout the course and stressed the most interesting points in history, rather than dragging the course out on non-important facts."

"He tried to teach us something, where the rest of the teachers didn't seem to care if you learned or not."

"He taught, not just read!"

"He would let us express our ideas and let us use our minds in order to tell what we thought and knew, rather than just make us take in all his thoughts on subjects discussed."

"He had a very interesting presentation. It was not the boring-type class situation in which you sat and took notes."

"He did not push you. He merely made a brief suggestion, then stood back and helped you when you needed it."

"He was able to hold your interest, and he was able to teach without you thinking it was being shoved down your throat."

"He wasn't a date nut. He was more concerned that we knew the why, where, who and what. He discussed our views with us and then gave us his. After being in his class, I felt ready for college."

"She was a teacher, not a study aid like most high school teachers."

"She knew what she was doing. Most of the other teachers were incompetent and boring in their special fields."

"He showed an interest in me and my work. This was not just a job to him."

Humanistic Values

"These teachers cared about the students, not just making money."

"She said it like it was, not your typical ultra-conservative high school teacher."

"She didn't make me feel inferior."

"He talked to students, instead of down to us."

"She was young enough to understand her class better."

"He was able to communicate on our level -- so many act above. He was literally one of us, yet highly respected."

"She had a genuine interest in her students. This was lacking in other teachers."

"He wasn't all business."

"She did not try to put herself above the student."

"He wasn't just a teacher."

"She gave a d_ _ _ about her students and the subject matter."

"She is a very pleasant person, more liberal than most instructors, presents a variety of activities, never the same old routine."

"The instructor was interested in individual students and was interested in conveying knowledge instead of conveying grades."

"Older teachers made us feel ill at ease."

Teacher Personality Vs. Competence

Several former students admitted that they did not particularly like the person whom they selected as the "best teacher" -- and that the teacher they liked most was not necessarily the most competent. The following are their comments:

"I didn't particularly like her at the time, and I did not make good grades in her class, but she was an excellent teacher, because she made you work for what you got."

"I didn't like her, but she taught me everything I needed to know in the field."

"Some of the teachers I 'liked' as persons were still not competent in their field."

"She made us learn the real way to write a theme. I didn't like her as a person, but I learned more from her than other English teachers."

"She knew her work, but she did not know people (students)."

General Comments

A minority of the former students preferred not to name a "best teacher," but did choose to comment on teachers in a general manner.

Positive Comments

"I do not feel I can rate any one teacher above the others, because even in my most difficult class (English) my teachers were extremely patient with me."

"I believe they were all good. I think probably I was a bad student."

"I don't think I had a best teacher. I believe the ones who taught me were all very good, and it was up to me whether I made good or bad grades. I got along well with all my teachers."

"I considered all my teachers to be good instructors."

"At the present time, no teacher stands out as the 'best' teacher. Each one was different, and this made each course have variety or interest, in my case. Also, I would like to add that my self-motivation was high, because I wanted to do the best I could and attend college."

"I had several good teachers. They were truthful and honest about things they weren't sure of."

"I like all my teachers."

"The teachers I learned more from were those who could convey professionalism and command respect, but at the same time had an awareness of 'the teenage world.'"

Negative Comments

"I do not remember, and I do not recall, a particularly dynamic instructor during my high school career."

"I did my work, admired many of them, but was really primarily just a 'nobody.' I do not have a favorite one. All were good teachers, but none seemed really to care."

"I don't remember any as being outstanding."

"I didn't have one."

"I can't remember any that really turned me on."

"I don't recall any being exceptionally good."

"None of my teachers cared enough about the student as an individual. They only cared about material and grades. I didn't have good teachers until college."

"I did not have a 'best' instructor."

"My teachers teached (sic) from a book. Today's students want to know more than the writings of a book. They want to know 'why'."

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